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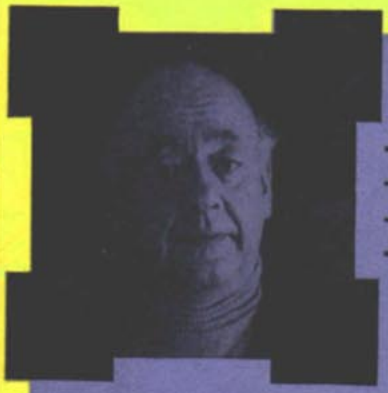

Eugène Ionesco

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יידיש and ENGLISH

Towards a New Lexicon

Leo Rosten

Reply to my Critics

M M Postan

New Poems

Kingsley Amis
Edoardo Sanguineti
Nigel Dennis
D M Thomas
D J Enright
N S Willey

Clio on the Couch

Bruce Mazlish

After the Revolt

Paris : Richard Mayne

Berlin : Kai Hermann

Groovy Lupin

Colin MacInnes

Sorbonne

Raymond Aron

John Osborne's New Plays

John Weightman

Brecht as a Classic

Martin Esslin

Edited by Melvin J Lasky & Nigel Dennis

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Kingsley Amis

South

Where the folks are happy and gay,
And the easy way is the right way.
—OLD SONG

A sun as bright as noon in Sicily
Against a soft, crystalline sky,
  Sky-blue mostly.

Bluff, slip-off slope, oxbow lake, meander,
Enormous, and yet like some river
  A long way from here.

Oak and horse-chestnut among half-unknown
Maple, dogwood; the squirrel's kin,
  The crow's cousin.

New wonders, but familiar in the mind,
A world of greenwood without end,
  God's England.

Actual dweller in the golden age,
Exempt from man's glum heritage:
  The noble savage,

At any rate as seen from a distance.
And so, of course, Wordsworth's peasants
  In all innocence,

And, if you like, the men of the Just City,
Fabulously rich without money,
  And, perforce, free.

II

The usual: ranch-style, eat-o-mat, drive-in,
Headlight, tail-light, floodlight, neon,
  And air-pollution—

Except the last, tolerable? Yes,
But, through street after street, the voice
  Of something vicious.

You blind? Can't you see they're inferior?—
Our women's what they're really after—
  You got to use fear—

If they try it I'm shooting me a coon—
Keep 'em out of uptown, midtown—
  Keep 'em down.

Across the tracks, a bit more of the usual:
Mad, hopeless, understandable
  Design to kill.

In the libraries, books about justice,
Freedom, innocence, goodness.
  No use.

III

The history of thought is a side-issue.
When events begin, an idea
  Is a lie.

To north and west, hope, not yet in vain;
Mexico too, not an illusion;
  Africa, even;

But in the South, nothing now or ever.
For black and white, no future.
  None. Not here.

D J Enright

Peace

The sky grey, the far sky black,
The trees tensed, the palms breathless,
The jasmine white like waiting nurses,
The sky grey, the far sky black.

And nothing happens, nothing.
The days go by, the weeks go by,
Sky waits, trees wait, flowers wait,
Time waits. And nothing happens.

Except a tiny creature runs outside,
And howls and hurls its arms about:
God damn the sky, God damn the trees,
God damn the storm that never breaks!

And nothing happens, nothing.
Except the little person goes inside,
Pats down its hair, sits at its desk,
And waits. And nothing happens.

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Edoardo Sanguineti

Purgatory of Hell

and those "complacent descriptions"; & then what: today (he said); (& then,
what, too, *onze, rue Payenne*); ("address & all"): today we are,
that we are (he said, too);
—because that Resnais film (I said)
is (unconsciously) fascist—:
but today (said Octavio Paz) we all
are (marxist); & by that he meant "all" (& by that only
"nosostros"): but then July 12th: & someone (I
said) had just tried (but what did he answer Jean-Paul?);
to decide ("je suis un homme");
—remember Jean-Paul swaying
in the rain? like the windscreen-wiper—:
the question; later
he said I had ("de gauche") then to explain (explain myself); (what
I meant); (& he meant then: what I meant
by fascism):
and I told her ("de gauche"): ah, I can't,
I can't; (love you); but then July 5th; in this (I said),
ah in this small caffé; ah what I was then to her!
different! ah how different, then! she was to me!:
—no love
(she said later); (for symbolic actions, she meant); but Fautrier said:
now I'll see to it (in every sense)—
then Calvino said
(at the Norman) that Pavese used to say; then I said (to myself): I'll explain;
just the same things (Paz's); this too (I'll explain); (this too:
how I can't love [you]); so, we must talk of something else (I said):
of something else speak (I will): I'll explain; I'll write a poem (I said): on
fascism:
I'll go to my son; I'll say: but in such persistent signs
see the obstinate, my son, dissimulation (. . .); and I'll explain
how the Italian (high) bourgeoisie; how I can't love her; how it's dreaming
(still); that fascism (I'll explain); (this!); how the son must,
now; (whose he has saved); be the figure; (the structure); (. . .);
of hope:
and to the Catholic journalist (PRI, maybe?) I wrote,
in fact; how it was; ah, but I ought (I said); (the Filius); had to be, ah;
I ought (to myself, I said); to be the figure; a justification;
(illustration); of desperation; an explanation I owe; of the historical
non-participation (suffered) with history:
of the lived alienation;
but Calvino—as I had said: 1848—: nicely "lucacs-ised", you are!
(he said); but you can't see (history) (I said): as nature; & I said: you can't
grasp (today) that object; (in so much present darkness, I meant: in so much
fascism); because this hand isn't a hand (if it doesn't grasp); this hand
that is still history, that isn't yet nature;
and maybe my son's hand (I said)
will be nature; & that object will be that object: what it was; in the dream;
because now the son is looking for a world;
ah, said Calvino, *why*
not write a pome on coitus interruptus? (what heaven, the States);
(from this point of view); & I said—as he had come back, after all—:
a paradisus interruptus:

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2

So we explained:
so (wretched, we) explained the twofold
dimension of the dream: of the withdrawn, inactive, troubling, disappointed dream; &
of the radiant, sharp-edged phantasm (in Europe):
of the ghost invoked;
ghost I invoke above the ruins:
now I must (il est indépassable, really)
(to my wife, too) explain (the ruins, too, of Hambye abbey), I must explain
les circonstances (July 4th): I must explain that I see it
as the taking form (in the park at Coutances, too), le marxisme,
indépassable, I see marriage (sharp-edged, among the mysterious trees),
pas encore dépassées (les circonstances); (with Monsieur de Gandillac, too,
on July 7th), the taking form of a cell (marriage): I invoke a cell (I said)
of resistance (& on July 9th, too, with general Bouvard, on the beach);
et tamquam poeta, I invoke (on the beach at Hauteville, too, in the storm) and
in this small caffé, et tamquam homo:
but will our heads touch, now
(in this wild wood); and to myself, still (invoking): oh couldn't
this be (I said), a love? oh couldn't (I said), this, be
(in this wild wood) a fascist love?
ah, so, invoking, I AM: tamquam
homme *relatif:*
in this PURGATORY OF HELL; because in this (we)
are redeemed (I told my wife): in this marriage; ah
in that (I said), (we) are redeemed, ah that conscience (too)
we (that political conscience) were to find again: sharp, that
(indépassable, this: le marxisme);
& I told Roberto (at the Norman,
again) how the prefiguring, the ghostly dream takes the form (sometimes)
of nostalgia;
& I said: the dream (sometimes) is withdrawal (but
is not); it is (I said) nostalgia, but disappointed nostalgia
of a future;
but later (from the papers): we are a governing class
(said someone); & as such (it said) we are responsible;
but within the limits (it said) of power; because we do not have powers
commensurate (& a decisive ten years lies ahead) with our
responsibilities:
so (in the via Pietro Micca top room) I & my wife
wrote: W PCI (right and left); & I wrote it three times (above
the fireplace); & my wife said: but this
is a den of missini
—and we wrote W PCI, furiously on the walls—;
(and I cut the letters with a key):

3

or as in dream, other time (in representation); & lived (other dream); or as
an analysis (a critical dream, a dream):
and when I came down (off that road),
spoiling that bush, & my cousin (from the road); (reproaching me); and
in firm farewell, she (the shrunken
dream, dreaming):
or in the exhibition-room (at Verona); but "something"
(he had written) "suffered" (this); (& "in life itself"); & had written
(Vedova): "I feel the ice in me cracking"; (& at the Albergo Centrale); for
an image of the time; groaning (or just an upset
tummy): a collision
of situations ("like a great universal narrative");

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then I said that in *Ortis*
was represented; & (in Rome); the drama; and the farewell (at the Albergo Locarno);
the drama of the intellectuals; (of the left); (of the time); & we should
therefore (I said) rewrite it; (because she was waiting); (as in dream); & without
the suicide; & leavable, above all (& "in life"); at the bottom of the stairs; (& "in life
itself"); she (as in dream); (because we've suffered); & when I came down & . . .
most likely; (something else . . .)
(& weak,
then), other time, other dream (dreaming); & had said (in Rome): this
is the time ("for a precise vision of the time") of humiliation (of intolerance),
(& she can't BEAR any wars, & . . .), of humiliated
intolerance . . .
& an analysis
(because she said: moral curiosity); (& weak, then); "knowing, as everyone does today,
that one can paint
everything";
("that man is infinite") . . . ; and now,
in me, I feel dream images cracking, I feel
opposed images
suffering (in me, I said); ("in life itself"); & without suicide; or when:
a critical dream (I said); and: two years ago I began
to travel; having to suffer
this paternity; or when
I thought of Tintoretto (for instance), (& he wrote, too: "dodecaphonic, ante
litteram" . . .), of course; or when . . .
(in representation):

4

oh, where (on the beach? where?); (place-scene, plage-plage); where look for you,
now?
(avec "les deux Françoises", for instance); & in anguish, too?
& talking, too, about the "premier pas" (shyly, on September 10th),
(at Donville); & waiting, like that, for the autumn;
or with Monsieur Bens, in the high (& then,
down!) girls' room:
(aux écuries, with the enormous mosquitoes, reading
Memmi, conversing with Lapassade, the monstrous sociologist); analysing
madame Garache & madame Toussaint; or at Granville, that Friday,
coming out of the Casino, & proceeding sur les remparts, against the wind (& all
sweaty, because we danced, *Pepito*, too); and being alone, too, being really
alone . . .
and Mocky, on the way back from St. Lô, was parting the hair on her forehead
(we had a drink, too, with Alain Borne, from Montélimar, Drôme); (but that night,
he refused to play aux Ambassadeurs): then all slept, in the car,
on the road to Paris, in the high (& then down!) night
(in the high mist):
& then, clinging to you (September 19th), in the high dream
(& then, down!), love!
Philippe (she said),
j'ai SOIF!:

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through Hebecrevon, Lessay, Portbail, St Sauveur (in the rain,
still); then Edith said I wasn't nice (because I didn't write for her, like Pierre,
quelques poèmes); (& we were not to leave);
Micheline
thought us rather simple; & Edith & Micheline, when I said I hadn't
betrayed her (my wife), were willing to believe it;
and here should be noted the:
"if I put my arms round you etc.", that followed);
then we all danced, even
Micha, in the little drawing-room; through Cerisy, Canisy, Coutances, Regnéville; (but on July
12th the Louvre was closed, Tuesday);
& she wrote (on a page of squared paper):
"I felt I can't look you in the face"; &: "I'm sorry for you";
& again she wrote (my wife): "I feel awful";
and then at Gap (H.A.),
(two days later), still numbed, almost lifeless: and to think (I said);
that we (almost with tears, I said); (and I meant, but my tears
were almost choking me; I meant: with a love like ours, we):
one day (we); (and in the square the band was blaring; and the room was
in a strange darkness);
(we) have to die:

Translated by Jan Farquharson & Giorgio Verrecchia

Nicholas Snowden Willey

Poem

I often found in nature books the phrase
Caused by a force to burst, caused by a force
To shatter the pod, to crack the concrete.
Sometimes a deeper strength was seen to stir
Beneath the flash force, a deeper power
As when, for instance, it is deeply Spring
That shatters the pod and deeply Autumn
That brings this green to a flecked conclusion;
But these are seasons, and like a mill wheel
Turn each year slower with the tangled weeds
And so each slippery year shines brighter
In the sunlight: a green wheel in moonlight
Is still green, and so this wheel discloses
A shimmering world to a world of air
And on the surface of that swimming world
Bubbles of airy memories burst home.
Power beneath power, these are seasons,
Turning in some deep reason or season.
Sometimes a deeper strength was seen to stir
Beneath the seasons, as when a green wheel
Is caused by a force to turn; but this force
Is not the mimic of some deeper force,
But an enduring reverberation.
When new wings part the air there is begun
The quiver that in Autumn shakes leaves down.
For the Autumn eye beholds its Autumn
As lucency by Autumn rushes fringed.
I am remembering a certain pond.
It is lucent, mute, fringed by dry rushes,
The space of an eye as I remember,
And all the members of Autumn were there
To see why that pond, the space of an eye,
Was transmuted translucent by the sky.
It is September. As it's September,
And as I am seasoned in making rhymes
I remember: and I say of a tree
Or point of light that voyages through space,
This was a woman once.

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Nigel Dennis

Winter Invitations to the Mediterranean

When the summer is over, they go home to the North
With their heads full of dreams and their eyes full of visions.
They dream of wine and pasta and red oleanders,
Their eyes recollect the light and the café tables,
The boats drawn up, the white reflections in the water.
When I write to them asking: Come and stay this winter,
They reply at once like bereaved souls, full of longing,
Telling me passionately that they will come, of course,
December at the latest, that they can hardly wait.
And some of them even arrange dates, and trains, and planes,
Hardly admitting that these may have to be cancelled.
And I accommodate these hopes and expect my guests
And prepare their sunny room and order in more wine,
Until the New Year comes and goes, and silence sets in:
Their letters stop, or bring only news and affection;
And slowly I wake up from the dream and know that they
Have woken from it too—that the northern winter is
Their natural element: they can never leave it.

II

Why is it so for them, but not for me?
Why must they live winter, to love summer?
Why should drizzling days and running ditches
Bring reassurance of stability?
Must a man get up on sunless mornings,
Icicles in ranks outside his window,
To feel he's won by stern gelidity
His right to next July's spaghetti?
Why are a blue sky and green artichokes
Morally unfit in January?
Why February with no overcoat
Enfeebling to a Nordic probity?
Here, red clover blooms in March, with orchids
That make no claims upon propriety
But should remind me (if my friends are right)
That I am run to seed,: spring will find me
Unwintered and debased, my backbone gone—
Flaccid, semitic, blowzy, and effete.

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The Jewish Graveyard in Malta

Too few Jews here to justify a rabbi, so
When the double-door in the wall is unlocked
With a huge key and my friend carried in
—Dressed in a coffin heavily embossed with
The head of Christ crucified and bearing the legend:
I know that my Redeemer liveth
(How absurd, these religious confusions!)—
Three Jewish businessmen from Valletta who
Have never known one word of Hebrew, read
The service in English from a blue book,
Give the dead his ritual washing, do
Everything the Law has always prescribed.
Three smiling brothers in the Faith, correctly
Hatted, two in black felt, one in a white cap
Very like a doily. Oh, what a friendly way to be
Buried—and oh, what a friendly place
To be buried in! Orange marigolds warm
Under a blue February sky; white narcissi
In clumps beside the graves. Who are you,
Lucky people? I go to look, and read:
ELIHU SALVU, BORN AT LODZ, POLAND, 1842/
PILOT-OFFICER ABRAHAM SOLOMONS, KILLED
IN ACTION, 1942/ JOHN MENDELSSON, 2nd.
LIEUTENANT, THE YORKSHIRE REGIMENT, MORTALLY
WOUNDED AT THE DARDANELLES/ Here's COHEN of
LIVERPOOL/ SIMONS of VIENNA/ from the
BRITISH WEST INDIES, ABRAHAMS/ one ISAACS, a
VICTIM OF THE HUNGARIAN WAR. How far, how
Strangely you have all travelled! How happy I feel
To discover you here! The ground you are in is
Never cold, as LODZ was; the wind here is never
Sharp as it was in VIENNA. You are all returned to
The Middle Sea of your forefathers, the world of
Stone, dust, and olive. Welcome a thousand times!
Shalom! Shalom!

Maltese Goat

A goat can climb anything, but
What it likes best is a
Heap of rubble, stones of all
Sizes, unstable and sliding.
Each neat hoof-hold is
Only for an instant;

Somewhere near the top there's
A sizeable block
Steady enough to allow the
Long lunge forward of
The indiarubber neck, the
Straining upward of
The flexible lips,

The quick nip at the
Fig or the tussock,
The reflective chew in
A lightning zigzag,
The moment's dignity
In a proud eye,
The held poise, the
Taut silhouette.

Dear brother, they say you stink.
Well, so do I. Do you
Recognise me, aspiring one? I
Was born under your sign.

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Christmas Oranges

(*To Tommy Agius Ferrante*)

Only ten days to Christmas
And the oranges are ready to pick
In the Boschetto Gardens. Golden
Globes in evergreen leaves, glowing
Down the valley in winter sunlight;
Every man running with his bag to buy,
Every stall displaying boxes and pyramids
Of golden oranges; and I, too, running
With my shopping bag to buy, to buy
My Christmas oranges—only ten days to go.
But my friend, who knows better ways of
Doing these things, gently stops me, saying:
"Never buy your Christmas oranges from
Those rogues, those sharks, those stall-holders;
Their price is tuppence over what is proper.
I shall speak to one of the Boschetto gardeners
Whose wife is the sister of a woman at Naxxar
Who is married to a man to whose uncle
I once did a most singular favour. This
Gardener knows only too well that his
Wife's sister's husband's uncle at Naxxar is
Under an obligation to me, and so he
Will supply you with oranges at a fair price."
So, I have laid my shopping bag aside politely,
And though everyone else in Malta is hurrying
To the Boschetto Gardens, hurrying to buy golden oranges,
I am waiting patiently at home for the gardener to
Respond to the long-standing obligation incurred by
His wife's sister's husband's uncle, which is
Repayable to me in golden oranges, each
Cheaper, though only to me, by tuppence at least.
Now, it is eight days to Christmas; now it is
Six; now, we are seriously down to four, and I
Am beginning to wonder (not for the first time) whether
It is ever wise to accept the help of friends, whether
The dishonourable tuppences of sharks and rogues are
Not more provident in the end. Has the solemn
Obligation of the Naxxar uncle failed somehow to
Inspire the gardener? I only know that with
Only two days to go, all the gold has run out of the valley;
There are only evergreen leaves in the Boschetto Gardens.

Nigel Dennis

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Hagiwara Sakutarō

Person Who Loves Love

With crimsoned lips I kissed the trunk
Of the new white birch . . .
Yet even if I were a man of spunk,
No breasts would lurch
Like rubber balls on my chest, and my
Slack skin would smell
Of no fine powder. But what am I
To be wishing me well?
A man in whom the sap ran dry,
A sherd, a shell.

But here, on this fragrant summer's day,
In a sparkling grove's
Clearing, I put myself away
And pull on gloves,
Gloves that over my whole hand slip
Like a sky sky-blue,
And a thing like a corset round my hip
I wrap on too,
And I fix my hair with a bobby-clip
As the young girls do.

I dust my neck with a sort of chalk
And I pat my hair,
Then, with that half-coquettish walk
And mincing air
Which girls affect, I tilt my head . . .
O pity me,
As I kiss the trunk of the new white birch,
As I bend the knee,
As I cling, lips painted rosely red,
To that white tall tree.

Home

Sitting in the old house, speaking
In silence to each other,
With no words said whatever
That either might regret;
Not sworn or open foes,
Not even quittance-seeking
Collectors of unpaid debt.

"Look, I'm your wife. I shall never,
Not though I die, depart."

The eyes, ill-tempered, glaring
Over a daggered nose
Stare from a vengeful heart
And, as our glances cross,
Neat malice nicks my nape.
Sitting in the old house, staring
At nothing; at a loss
How to escape, to escape.

Translated by Graeme Wilson

D. M. Thomas

Eden

(*found-poem from the lips of Sean Thomas, aged 4*)

When I kiss Eve
all the clothes dance
and all the boys jump up on to the roof
And
do you know what the dinner does?
The dinner comes down from the big school
then it lays itself on the tables
and eats itself up
Do you know what the plates do?
They gather themselves up
they go to Mrs Herd
they get into the washing-basin
they wash themselves
and they put themselves back on the shelves
And
do you know what the pictures do?
They come down
throw the old ones in the fire
then the crayons get out
pull out a piece of paper
they draw another picture
then the sellotape comes out of the cupboard
and sticks the pictures up
And
do you know what the school does?
The school pulls itself down
and builds itself up into a church

When I kiss Eve
magic-stuff comes
out through our mouths and
Do you know what the plants do?
They all die
then the seeds in the bag
come into the garden
then they pop into the ground
And
do you know what the trees do?
They spring themselves down and die
the seeds walk about
in the mud
and the wind comes along and blows over them
and grows up into appletrees and
cherrytrees grow up
then some sunflowers came
and tulips came
and roses came
And and
do you know what the lights do?
They come down
the bulbs go to the shop
to buy another bulb
Do you know what the piano does?

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The piano plays itself and
all the toys jump
and play with themselves
And
do you know what the sky does?
All the sky jumps down
in the night it did
the sun fell the wind dropped
and half the world fell down
because of the magic-stuff
coming out of our mouths and
all the flies were dead
and all the wasps were dead
no more flies and no more wasps
And
And
And
do you know what the plates do?
They gather themselves up . . .

Echoes of Venus over Car Radio

(*the first landing on Venus, October* 1967)

'must guard against the impression that we control
control
Venus having merely probed its atmosphere
fear fear
Listen now to our recording
of the response of Venus
simple timeless obsessive
. . . .

One risk must have concerned them to take care
take care
that alien life-forms don't come
don't come
into a world by taking root inside
inside
the capsule . . .
Professor Tikhov may we ask you to
you too
predict the findings of this great exploit
exploit
do you share Lovell's theory that primeval
evil
sea-spores might exist despite the nature
nature
of our twin-planet's atmosphere and this heat
this heat
which the probe has recorded deep down
deep down
beneath the clouds May I say it would be madness
madness
to be certain at this stage suppose
suppose
there is a sea and it breeds life what then . . .'
what then?

Dr. Livingstone, I presume

Streetlamps through the London
fog as the moon through jungle
foliage, Gladstone and Jack the Ripper
hack a path towards each other,
meeting and passing with a slight bow
of surprised recognition,
touch of black gloves.

Their object is one: to hack
out the bright corrupting coins
from where they have been stuffed
up into Little Emily's cunt.
They stop, where she has stooped to piss,
and opening their bags full of salvation,
of bibles and surgical knives,
note that two of the round bright
coins have been pushed right up
into her obscene eyes.

The miasma zinging with poison-tipped
arrows breaking harmlessly against
frockcoats of empire.

Streets paved with Copperfields.
Music-hall songs, shrill as cockatoos,
strangle the thin cries
of native-girls.
The blood-monsoon
has broken.

Meanwhile, in the missionary-compounds,
crinolined wives see to their
evening duties; the harmonium wails
Jesus Loves You
to the herded hands;
Little Nell is sent packing
for allowing herself to be taken
by an overseer who would have sent her packing
if she had not.
They bar the stockade,
they close their eyes and pray
that the beasts will not come crawling to their hole,
to drink of the standing scum,
tonight.

D. M. Thomas

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Eugène Ionesco

Journal

Passé—Présent (d'un pays à l'autre)

About 1940

At *l'Institut Augustinien*, a lecture by Tudor on the notion of Man. He was very timid, very prudent, in daring to suggest that Nietzsche is to a large extent responsible for the fact that modern man, having lost his humanity, has not risen but fallen.

(*Looking again at this passage, written before the war of 1940. He was, in fact, dealing only with Hitlerian or Fascist man.*)

In my view, he did not insist strongly enough on Nietzsche's Luciferian pride. In his longing to be an *Übermensch*, the man nourishing this desire became an hyena. I met Constantin at the lecture. His gentle, tender, conciliatory air hides criminal impulses, doctrinally criminal ones. He came up to me smiling, his face wreathed in smiles. I can congratulate myself on having had the strength of mind to tell him that his easy-going manner did not deceive me, and that the apparent friendship which he has for me will never make me forgive him for his political ideas. He held out his hand to me, which I was in no hurry to take.

"You don't want to shake hands with me?"

"Not all that much, but since I have to," I replied with a sigh.

Then I went with Tudor to catch his tram.

When he is giving a lecture, when he is surrounded by people, he puts a brave face on it: he's calm, self-possessed, seems sure of himself. But outside, in the darkness of the street, he seized my arm. He was on the point of collapse. He could take only short steps, and uttered a kind of plaintive grunt every now and then, like an old man or an invalid. He's in danger. My presence can't give him much reassurance.

Before the lecture, Constantin was having a discussion with someone called Virgile, a philosophy graduate. Decay is written all over the latter's face, his complexion is grey and dirty. Jean told me that Virgile maintained we should destroy everything so that everything could start again from zero. Jean was stupefied and scandalised. I wasn't. There's nothing at all original about this idea, it is merely a deplorable *cliché* peculiar to "Revolutions" of the Left and the Right and corresponds, in essence, to nothing real; or, if it does, to hatred and stupidity, not to a desire for purification.

I looked at this man Virgile, who was so ugly, so unattractive, so sordid, that he made you want to destroy the world, starting with him.

I have bought a new notebook.

I intend to change my tone and manner of writing. When I am too angry, or too depressed, I shall avoid writing. All I shall do from now on is describe specific things, note concrete facts. The least passion possible. Finally, as my friend *C.* used to tell me, the thought that the mouths that speak, that hurl insults and invective, will rot, that the clenched fists will lose their flesh and bone, that all the sound and fury will be replaced by silence, by silence; the thought that nobody after us will ever remember the tortures and massacres; the thought that all this will be dust and less than dust; the thought also that what I loved most in this world and felt jealous for will cease to be; that the arms which have held me, which have held someone else, will disintegrate, will come apart, will fall, will disappear; the thought that all this, everything I love, everything I am afraid of, everything I hate, everything I want to reject,

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everything I want to keep, when I think that all this will one day be no more, I feel consoled and can sleep. All this is nothing, all this will die, all this will fade away, the knowledge that all this will die comforts me, allows me to live.

But I shall not manage to write without passion, without suffering, and without pain.

There are two hundred pages in this exercise book. I have just begun it. What will our situation be when I have reached the two-hundredth?

Where shall we be? And shall we still be?

What is going to happen during these two hundred pages—that is what we worry and torment ourselves to know; but I do hope that I shall succeed in filling these two hundred pages, that we shall be here, when these two hundred pages are finished. This reassures me. It won't last, we shall overcome, and continue on our way.

1967

I LOOK at these old pages again and copy them out. I find it hard to re-absorb myself in this past. Before I start on this block of memories, I find myself in the present, facing what is happening now.

The Soviet government (we are in June 1967) is rearming the Egyptians after their extraordinary defeat. The Jews are surrounded by eighty million Arabs, as we know. The Arabs will learn how to make war as well, one day! If the Israelis are defeated, they will be killed. As François E. tells me, everyone will then be able to pity them quite wholeheartedly. The Left, he tells me, has a defeatist policy. It cannot accept that the Israelis should not have been victims, not have been the Arabs' prey. Hence this reversal of sympathies. People are beginning to justify the Egyptians and the Algerians. People love them; they love them because they have been defeated, of course; but also because it is the Egyptians and the Arabs who are the killers.

People love killers. And if they do feel sorry for victims, it is so as to thank them for letting themselves get killed. This is not a complex or a state of mind which is all that difficult to analyse, now that we know about psycho-analysis.

As far as I am concerned, being neither a sadist nor a masochist, I cannot prevent myself from thinking, when I see this violent rebirth of anti-Semitism, disguised as anti-Zionism, or as the cult of progress when directed against the Jews in Russia, already dispersed, of what would happen if there were no Jews. When people say that the Jewish problem does not exist, this clearly means, psychoanalytically, that they are denying the existence of the Jews, eliminating them. I therefore believe that without the Jews, the world would be harsh and sad. What keeps us alive? The hope that some day or other, everyone will change, and everything will change and be good and beautiful. Without the Jews, we should not have this belief: we should not hope in the coming or the return of a Messiah, the saviour. We still hope, knowing that the Messiah is behind the door: we hope that he will open it one day and that the world will be flooded with joy and light. We all hope in the ideal City, that is to say we all hope that a new Jerusalem will rise up from the deserts and from death. We hope for the transfiguration of the world, and we shall hope for this as long as there are Jews. Without them, madness of crime; without them, darkness.

About 1940

THIS CONSTANT anguish seizes me by the throat. How can I still be afraid of death, how can I still not ardently desire it!

I HAVE ALWAYS tried to believe in God. Not naïve, not subtle enough. A certain metaphysical inadequacy.

But I have not completely burned all my bridges with God.

AT LA CHAPELLE-ATHENAISE, with Marie, I often used to go to old Dalibart's farm. We often used to come back late. Once, it was very dark, we had no lantern, the wind was blowing through the trees. Marie said that it was a voice talking to us, which we could not understand, it was so dark that we were afraid of falling into the ditch, we were afraid of bumping into the tree trunks, afraid of being scratched by the brambles in the hedges. When we reached the end of the field, on the ridge overlooking the mill, we saw, down below, in the valley, the dim lights of our house. We were cold, we were hurrying through the darkness, we were getting nearer. We went down the last little slope, we heard the gentle sound of our stream. We crossed the plank that served as a bridge. We passed near the stable, the cows heard us

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and mooed; the smell of milk, of cows, of manure; we went into the house, and old Jeannette's soup had been there for a long time, waiting for us in the pot....

TWO OF MY TEETH are aching. They're going bad: a canine and a molar, painful sensation. I look in the glass: they're decaying, it's certain. Sadness.

The feeling that I am starting to decompose. That puts the lid on it. I shall have to find the money to pay a dentist. The decay must be stopped from going any further. One tooth goes, then another. One lock of hair, then another. Then a finger-nail, a knuckle, a finger, a hand.... Bit by bit, bit by bit, we go away, we fall apart, we melt. What's left is picked up in a shovel and thrown in the rubbish bin. Is anyone going to pick us up and put us together again?

IT SEEMS TO ME, it seems to me that the images of the village and of the Mill are slowly growing dim, or are gradually being swallowed up, or rather, that they are paler and paler, more and more faded, they are withering like autumn leaves.

HOW DIFFICULT it is to forgive our enemies. How can we avoid hating them? Nevertheless, vengeance gives neither satisfaction nor compensation: what's the good of it once the wrong has been done? The harm remains, and that is what we have to live with.

AT THE VERY LAST MOMENT, when we feel we have lost everything, perhaps we shall escape, rise up, and conquer.

I wonder how we shall manage to escape. In our sky, the threat.

The danger is approaching, shutting us in, growing tighter and tighter. Shall we be crushed, how can we resist and endure? I mean: how can we resist and endure morally, how can we remain confident, how can we not yield, how can we believe in my justice?

Even if I resisted, if I happened to be able to write books, one day, if I do manage to express myself publicly, will people listen to me with enough attention, will they believe, will they be moved?

THE ONLY PEOPLE who ought to speak, the only ones who ought to write, are those who have something to say. Everyone has something to say. I am everyone, or a part of everyone. I have something to say. This isn't quite true: those who are just everyone have nothing to say, since everyone says what they would say. Half of ourselves must be everyone, more precisely, a little of us must be everyone, half other people, half ourself. Everyone is the "One," impersonal, an emptiness. We must be personal. I myself am what conflicts with other people, other people are those who conflict with me. It is this confrontation, this balance, which constitutes what is personal.

I must try to speak, and tell myself what I am. That is what becoming oneself means. Existing means becoming oneself. We must not be great ideologues; there will be enough of them, after this war, too many "thinkers," *i.e.*, people who draw conclusions for the future from a past that can never again be the future. Anything recurring in the future from this past will not be recognised. We must be ourselves. In trying to be ourselves, we must not be afraid of being ordinary, for otherwise we could not be representative. Everything which might seem ordinary or superficial or flat, can, in twenty, or fifty, or a hundred years, become fascinating. We must look at things in a long perspective. We mustn't let ourselves be caught in the trap of ideologies, of these ephemeral *clichés*, these petty contemporary truths which maintain, for example, that individualist literature has had its day; that we must write in a "collectivist" spirit to express the new world, whether it be Nationalist or Communist, Nazi or something else.

1967

IN FACT, it is ideologies and ideological literary fashions which are perishable. We realise this today when we look at the ideological fashions of twenty-five or thirty years ago; we haven't yet realised that today's ideological fashions are as perishable as those of 1935. What is left of the doctrines of Fascism? But the writers are still there. Brunetière and Taine, as critics, are quite useless; the writers they judged, favourably or unfavourably, are still there. Yet Brunetière or Sainte-Beuve or Taine—like Goldmann, or Barthes or Dort nowadays—showed the same dogmatic conceit in trying to control literature. Besides, when people condemn (or used to condemn) individualism in literature, did they realise, or do they realise, that perhaps individualism as such does

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not exist, that it is only a way of expressing other people through oneself.

WE MUST BE ABOVE all this, soaring high above our times, going beyond it so that we do not disappear with it. It is perhaps because I am weak, or because I am strong, for what looks like weakness can be strength, that I shall be able to stand up to crises, to tendencies, to the ebb and flow of time, not outside my time, struggling against my time, against the stream, in opposition, and expressing my time, precisely through my opposition to it, this opposition showing itself not through ideologies, for these are merely waves destined to disappear. I shall not be just another wave, but a rock, perhaps, that is to say a human permanence, a kind of awareness, sometimes covered over by the waves but always there. Don't let yourself go. Keep your lucidity, don't be taken in, judge things sensibly, ideologies are mad, everyone is an ideologist, everyone is a passionate and fanatic ideologist; contrary to what is generally said, common sense is the least well distributed thing in the world. Ideologies are crises.

AND IF I MANAGE to have a name, this is a great deal and not very much. It can come about, by chance, that what I write will find a suitable moment, a time which is neither too near, when the storm is still raging, nor too far away, when the storm will have been over for too long. And if I did manage to find a posterity which welcomed me, what good could that do: it's not worth the trouble.

The only concern that lifts man above himself is the concern for the absolute, I mean the fact that man is haunted by the absolute as his essential need. Our century has fallen from grace because the preoccupation with the absolute has been replaced by the political problem, by political fury; when man is no longer concerned with the problem of ultimate ends, when all that interests him is the destiny of a political nation, of the economy, of social problems, when the great metaphysical problems have ceased to make him suffer, leaving him indifferent, humanity is degraded, brought down to the level of the beasts. I find nothing more depressingly stupid than the act of selling one's life to some political party or other. We should mistrust the lie which claims that what is political is also spiritual and that politics also offers a metaphysical answer.

1967

POLITICS have ceased to be a way of organising the city, but have become a means of disorganising it; they have become the desire to wreck and destroy, wrecking for wrecking's sake, revolution for revolution's sake, the unavowed desire to abolish the achievements of the mind. Unstable revolutions, tyrannies and systems of censorship, cultural revolutions are means of destroying culture; cultural revolutions, on the right, on the left, burn books, destroy monuments. We can see it in our own time, in 1967 as in the days of Savonarola; we can see it today in this plague of prohibitions. Modern revolutions, with their false religions, are like the Christian revolutions which destroyed the pagan cultures; they are like the Moslem faith which destroyed Byzantium and the Athenian monuments. Every revolution destroys the library at Alexandria.

About 1940

THE "AESTHETIC" POINT of view is equally mediocre. For the angels, as for divine awareness or for the mind which is supreme intelligence, cathedrals are simply crude piles of stones, vague sketches trying to be signs, a clumsy language; even Bach's music, a set of grinding discords.

IN A YEAR, perhaps, we shall be dead, or perhaps the nightmare will have disappeared and we shall breathe freely. In a year or in two years, we shall be merry, we shall dance if our legs are still young, if we still have any teeth, if they have not been eaten away by decay.

VISIT TO B's. The wine, the music, some picture or other awoke my nostalgia for beauty, for adventure, for free-ranging liberty. Men have discovered the Cape of Good Hope, they have discovered the Americas, they have discovered unknown towns, palaces, unknown fruits, they have encountered people of another colour and strange, unheard-of civilisations. And here we are, among the ugliest people on earth, among cretins, louts, ogres seeking to devour us, what a fate! What have we done, oh God, to be in the hands of people like this?

I live in terror all day. At night, nightmares. I, who would have liked to be a conquistador!

I AM SAILING in a frail skiff through tempests of chaos. Everyone I know has a system to explain the world, and to explain what is hap-

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pening nowadays, what is taking place in the world. They can all understand and explain everything. I'm the only person in the world who can understand nothing about it; they all have keys or master-keys.

All systems are false; any system is and can be only an image, a different way of imagining what one is, or picturing the world to oneself, the world which is only the starting-point for the different pictures. Every system sets out from reality, which is formless, and then moves away from it. The more perfect, round, acceptable, probable, logical or coherent a system is, the more unreal and artificial it is. Every system is therefore fundamentally artificial, remote from reality. If you want, you can choose one of these systems (there are two or three going about the world at the moment), one of these images or explanations which would suit us best. But I hate the Fascist cosmos, I have no love or admiration for the Communist cosmos, and I really wonder whether I do prefer liberalisms, those second-bests. The man who cannot manage to convince himself that the system expresses, covers, grasps, absorbs reality—who refuses keys and has no master-key—can live only in chaos. This is not a human, livable reality. I am inside chaos, I am living the unlivable.

But let us allow ourselves to be carried by the waves of chaos. Let us drift on this stormy sea of reality.

I TELL MYSELF that I am below everything. In fact, I don't believe it. What I really think is that I am above it. But if I think that I am below or above everything and anything, these expressions prove that I too have a system, and kinds of criteria.

Not having a system still means having one.

I am only on the edge of chaos; I am not mad yet.

Or again, from the other point of view, I am only on the edge of chaos, I am still mad: being mad means having a world picture, giving oneself explanations. Men are mad. To say that I am not mad means saying that I am mad in the eyes of men. I am only almost mad. My mind still *organises*, even though very simply.

X. TELLS ME: "There has never been a great artist, a great writer who was behind the times in his own day!..." (*1967. Thus, in 1935 as today in 1967, writers were asked to be committed, in the movement of History, facing forward. The blackmail used by the Fascists, who were also facing the right way in History, is the same blackmail used by the Communists and the Soviet government today. The revolutionaries of today, the leaders, the agitators, the "libido dominandi" of today are different only in their doctrines, since these are only the cloak, the disguise for the same basic "libido dominandi." But I will continue with the notes written round about 1940, and which continue.*)

But what does it mean when we say that someone is "behind the times"? Yet another of the numerous *clichés* that we ought to expel from our minds, that we ought to refuse to use. "To be behind the times" is often, precisely, to belong to the opposition, to a minority which criticises the direction which the march of History is taking in their own day. To be behind the times means in reality "not to let them get away with it," "not to let oneself be taken in." You sometimes feel that there are no precursors and no left-overs but that there seem to be certain principles (or permanent attitudes and positions) in permanent conflict, which are taken up and rejected in turn, which take turns in winning or losing, whose appearance may vary according to the historical period, but whose profound identity remains the same. Kant takes up Plato again, in his own way; Jung's archetypes are, similarly, a re-justification of Platonic Ideas. Bergson takes up Heraclitus again; Hegel had also done the same.

Democratic societies succeed aristocratic ones, tyrannies succeed liberalism. When a society, a social régime, grows lax, then a reaction or a revolution (the two terms can be basically synonymous) brings a harsh reintroduction of the hierarchical structure of society and of authority, and so it goes on. Consequently, all those who are opposed to what is called *"le moment historique"* can be equally well seen as either dragging their feet or as running ahead.

Charles Baudelaire, an opponent of the progressive thought of the 19th century—of positivism (*of rationalism*, 1967 NOTE) and *progressiste* social reforms, for he held that this cult of progress was metaphysically a regression—was indeed a supporter and a representative of the aristocratic attitude. The famous sentence which proclaimed that "Only the priest, the soldier and the poet deserve esteem, the rest of Humanity deserves only the whip" indeed bears his mark. He was truly "reactionary," a non-

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conformist, a paradoxical solitary, *un retardataire*. At the same time, he can be considered as a precursor of certain Nietzschean doctrines, of current German thought, very much of the present day, of Hitlerian or Spenglerian ideas; I am thinking not only of the Spengler of the *Decline of the West*, but above all of the Spengler of *The Decisive Years*, that violent pamphlet against the "masses," the non-élites.

Baudelaire's attitude was also that of Edgar Allan Poe, living in democratic America; Poe was also opposed to his time. But nobody was ever more "reactionary," more behind his times than Dante, the enemy of the Renaissance, of the young Italian republics, and of nationalism, and the supporter of the Hohenstaufen. Didn't he want a new empire stretching over the whole of Europe? And wasn't Petrarch another writer who was *un retardataire*, wishing as he did for a reconstitution of the Roman empire? And couldn't Aristotle be claimed as giving support to modern racialist theories? Today, the Fascists seem to represent History on the march, although they were once considered "behind the times." But History will be prevented from continuing in that direction. They will then be reactionaries again. And perhaps we shall be right again. I have a tendency to be, almost always, against my own time, swimming against the current.

I believe that our ideas are not "historical," that they do not represent a certain historical moment, or that they do not represent only the historical moment in which they happen to occur. I believe that they express the deep, extra-historical tendencies, which go beyond us and beyond the surface of history, which come from very, very far away and which, defeated or driven back today, will reappear tomorrow, will find a new crystallisation tomorrow, and take up the struggle again. Ideas are, in reality, the expression of tendencies which are not only cerebral or social; they also express metaphysical temperaments. Biological and metaphysical ones—biological, metaphysical, and cosmic ones—somewhat like the ebb and flow of the tides, like the phases of the moon, like day and night, like the seasons which come and go, which seem to drive one another out in turn. We are not alone; what we think is eternal. What I think, what I feel, other people think and feel. Other people will think it and feel it. Every attitude is justified because it is not the expression, the invention, of one isolated individual; it expresses not a case but a generality. Our ideas and tendencies neither go astray nor perish. We must attempt to redefine these eternal principles which recur in all these different aspects, at every moment of History. And, nevertheless, we represent our own time even if we are against it: movement is not linear.

To be free, to be outside History, not to form part of the world's order, not to be an instrument in the orchestra or a note in the symphony. Not to be on stage. To see and hear everything from where the audience sits. As if we were outside the universe. If we are on stage, if we form part of the orchestra, all we hear is tumult, all we can distinguish are discords.

Look at them; listen to them. "They are not avenging themselves, they are punishing. They are *not* killing, they are defending themselves: self-defence is justified. They do not hate, they do not persecute, they render justice, they seek neither to conquer nor to rule, but to organise the world. They do not want to drive out the tyrants to take their place, they want to establish true order." They wage only holy wars. Their hands are dripping with blood, they are hideous, ferocious, they look like wild beasts, they sink into the mud, they howl.

I can't live with these madmen; I take no part in their festivities; they are trying to drag me along with them. No time to explain to them. Thus, I too am a martyr striving to become an executioner.

Just met T., who confessed to me that he believes in the transmigration of souls. He was suffering from sciatica and, for the time being, could not even move from one chair to another. He is writing a theory of values.

Speech by Hitler in the *Reichstag* yesterday; and, naturally, as usual, reproduced in every newspaper in the land. Among other things, it contains a summary, an account of the ideas of the Germanic racialist metaphysic. Hitler may or may not believe in it. But if History continues to move in the direction that Hitler wants, every nation and every ideologist will take up these ideas as if they were their own; they will become dogmas, axioms which will be used as a basis for a new science of man. You can use science to support anything, to prove anything. You can do what you want with science.

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S. TELLS ME, as we walk through the streets together: "Look at them, look at them. They're filled with the mud of propaganda. They think that they themselves have invented and thought out what has been dinned into their heads."

In a few years time, when the "direction of History" has been changed, their heads will be full of the mud of another propaganda. There are a few men who rule: all the others are ruled, are passive, as in many animal societies, as in many insect societies. But the rulers themselves merely obey, unconsciously, their own authoritarian instincts to rule. Free men are not ruled, and are not rulers.

PERHAPS the white race has had its day. Some say this is so, I am inclined to believe it! Let's have done, yes, let's have done with the disbelieving but credulous French, the filthy Italians, the fierce and stupid Germans, the alternately mad and apathetic English, the idiotically optimistic Americans, the cruel and mystical Russians (mystical for what? mystical for cruelty). Let the yellow races come and invade these narrow-minded Westerners! The moment is not far off. If the Japanese obtain naval supremacy, they will be the masters of the world. That'll be one in the eye for Hitler! We shall be able to become the white slaves of the Chinese and Japanese. Europe, which invented History, will have to exit "for a thousand years."

I COULD JUST AS WELL be living in the greatest peace. Let weariness overwhelm me. This life, which fills us all with horror and which we are so terrified to leave. To be able to die without hatred, to be able to leave this world behind, regretfully, still good friends as you are with the woman who made you suffer and whom you leave without hard feelings. Go beyond, forgive everything. Even the mass killings which God, which History, which stupidity, which reason have allowed. . . .It's too late, I'm too sleepy.

1967

Today, C. tells me roughly what I was thinking myself and what I still tell myself: "Don't busy yourself with History, it's bad theatre. History is stupid and vulgar; it is the unleashing of the most sordid, the most deceitful passions."

1940: It's a month since I bought this exercise book, time drags but it passes all the same. I've reached page. . . .

THERE ARE two races of men: those who are indifferent to the problems of religion, of metaphysics, of death, and those whom political problems leave or could leave indifferent. Politicians don't think about death; action situates them in a perpetual present.

"WHY ARE YOU afraid of death?" B. asks me, "It's a petty, individualistic problem."

In fact, man is petty: the problem of death is a human problem. Cows don't think about death. Cows aren't petty.

Everyone wants to tell everyone else what to do. Everyone objects to being told what to do by everyone else. This establishes a balance which is at least dynamic.

1967

The Middle East "conflict" has calmed down a little. It has prevented us from concerning ourselves with literature for three or four weeks. Now, I can start again. From time to time, we are thrown into reality. Then, a precarious calm re-establishes itself, à nouveau. *We live in illusion. Then, we can write beautiful books and talk, for example, about the fact that we know that the precarious calm of the present moment is illusory. We know it and we don't know it at all. We talk about illusion and about what is not illusion. We nevertheless are in an illusion but still with one foot in reality. If I say: "How I would like there to be peace, how I would like to love this world which I do love, but to love it better, how I would like to love!", then people reply: "It's because you want people to love you, but there is nothing to love, love is a trick." Of course, of course. Loving perhaps is a sort of cowardice: it means wanting people to defend you because the people who love you are your defenders, and not wanting to fight yourself. Of course. But I can reply that hatred is no less stupid than love and that the desire to fight corresponds to atavistic instincts and that this also needs to be described for what it is. We mustn't love, we mustn't hate, we mustn't not love and we mustn't not hate. We mustn't do this either. During the other conflicts, the other wars and revolutions and upheavals that I have gone through in my life, all I have really done is go through*

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them. It was a cynicism filled with vitality, a youthful cynicism.

Then, it has become more and more difficult for me to be indifferent. That millions and millions of people should die is bearable. That they should be massacred by other men ceases to be bearable. My revolt was and remains a romantic one. Fortunately. It is not political, for whoever takes sides cannot in any case avoid being a killer. It is the condition of our existence that I find unacceptable. It is being on earth that I find unacceptable. It is not being able to understand which is unacceptable, and we cannot understand since what characterises us is that we are finite. I continue to be naïve in my revolt as I used to be candid in my cynicism, but now I can no longer bear civilisations to disappear, nations to collapse, societies to be broken up and scattered to the winds, universes to go up in flames and crash down in ruins.

I am obviously on Israel's side. Perhaps because I have read the Bible. Perhaps because I was brought up as a Christian and because, after all, Christianity is only a Jewish sect. Perhaps because, if I could bear the death of five or ten or fifteen or twenty million people, I cannot now bear the death of twenty million people and one: it is, as they say, the last straw that breaks the camel's back. I also know that the Jews have made a barren land fertile. I know that their neighbours cannot do this and are jealous of this achievement. I know that the progressive Arab states are not progressive and are ruled in Egypt and Algeria by military and Fascist juntas. In short, I'm on the side of the Jews. Finally, I have chosen the people that has managed to communicate with us, even if this people is only marginally less bad than the others. I also know that what the Algerian rulers live off is hatred, and that what Nasser the imperialist, the killer of Yemenites and Sudanese, lives off is overweening pride.

Just when hostilities were beginning, just when we thought that everything was lost for Israel, I despairingly asked an Israeli diplomat what I could do. All I can manage, I said, is write an article in some newspaper or other. That's a good deal, he replied, do it. everything counts. I wrote this article, and published it. I wrote another. I had the feeling of having really done something. Something useful, something very small, but of having done this little something conscientiously, of not having been completely useless, of having been like a sergeant during the war, doing his little job of work in his little section, or of having been one of those voices, of those hundreds of thousands of voices which make the scales come down on the side of one of the elect.

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[1] *Répétition générale* (dress rehearsal), in the French text, begins a series of puns which are untranslatable in English: *la gêne*, meaning embarrassment or, in extreme cases, poverty; *gênant*, embarrassing; *jeûne*, fast; Gênes, Genoa; *gêneur*, someone who causes boredom or embarrassment—all words containing the same sound as *général*.

LOOKING THROUGH these notes written at the beginning of another war, I find this: "No one has the right to possess the world. No one gives this right up." (I have not really changed my view.)

. . . If we lived in another age, an age without terror and without anguish, I should have been tormented by boredom, by the sadness of living, by professional ambition. I should like to overcome this fury and this terror, but I cannot. Formerly, I had to work; laziness prevented me from doing so. Whatever happens, I always have the same inability, in some form or another, to go beyond myself. Laziness and fury, *i.e.*, the symptoms of impossibility.

General ideas, over general ideas. Very general ideas. Not very general ideas. Insufficiently general ideas. The general's ideas. The generals's wife's ideas. The generous general's wife. The general ideas of the general's generous wife. Generally, the general ideas of the general's wife are generous. Generals, generously invited to a general rehearsal.[1] Generals of the young generations. Generate generals. In general, we call it the generals' generation. Genes. Embarrassment. Embarrass the generous general of the young generation. Let us regenerate our generals. A regenerated general. A young and awkward general. This regenerated general of the young generation is becoming awkward. The prolonged fast restricted the generous young general. Generous general, noble horse. Don't put yourself to any trouble, fast away, young generous generals. Generally, the generous general of the young generation went to Genoa to fast without hindrance, regenerate his genius and generalise his ideas, his chromosomes and genes being in general rather strained. General generosity. Boring generals, bored by bores. General generosity, general generosity, generous generation.

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Leo Rosten

Yiddish & English

Towards a New Lexicon

IT MUST BE obvious to any student of the English language that in the past 30–40 years a remarkable number of Yiddish words and phrasings have become an accepted colloquial (at least) part of our tongue. I am not alluding to such bilingual japeries as shop-signs that read "*Ici on parle Yiddish*" or "*Aqui se habla Yiddish*" or gag lapel-buttons that say "EAT FRUIT!" or proclaim KAFKA IS A KVETCH (chronic complainer). I refer to the many Yiddish words and expressions one encounters in English newspapers, magazines, fiction and films; or hears on English and American radio and television; or overhears in a crowd, on a street, in a bus in many a city in Great Britain or the United States.

Almost ten years ago, I began to keep a file of Yiddish-in-English. It rapidly grew into a copious and infinitely diverting collection. I was not surprised to find Yiddishisms generously sprinkled through the prose used by luminaries of the entertainment world (theatre, cinema, night clubs, television), which is always quick to adopt locutions more picturesque than their English equivalents—or for which, in fact, there just are no English words of equal pungency: *shmaltz, shtik* (a stylised or arch piece of acting too-much-used by a performer), *yenta* (gossip), *chutzpah* (unbelievable gall), *shmo* (a jerk), *shlep* (to drag, a drip), *shmegegge* (hot air, baloney), *megillah* (long, boring, over-detailed account).

What did surprise me were the austere, slang-eschewing places in which Yiddish words and syntax were employed to maximise an effect or add colour to a concept. It began to dawn on me that something of a revolution in our linguistic mores is under way when I found the following:

An article on mortgage rates in the London *Economist*, captioned HOME LOAN HOO-HA.

The *Times Literary Supplement*, in a learned leader on the contemporary novel, formulating resignation to the inevitable: "Should, schmould, shouldn't, schmouldn't."

An officer in the Pentagon, describing the pattern of aerial bombardment around Haiphong: "You might call it the *bagel* strategy."

An advertisement for Irish Whiskey: "Scotch is a fine beverage and deserves its popularity. But enough is enough already."

An advertisement in the *Observer* captioned A BOBSWORTH OF NOSH.

The *Wall Street Journal*, on student rebellions, declaiming REVOLUTION, SHMEVOLUTION.

The *Times Literary Supplement* characterising certain embroilments as "mish-mash."

"Chutzpah" adorning the *New York Times, Newsweek*, ENCOUNTER, *Commentary*, the *Observer*.

Time Magazine enlisting *klutz* (dolt), *shtik, nudnik* (pest), *schmaltz* and *shlep*.

Now TAKE THE suffix *nik*, widely used to convert a common word into a derisive label for an ardent practitioner, or devotee, of something. How could we manage without such priceless coinages as *beatnik* or *peacenik*? The *New York Times* recently dubbed crusading votaries of Johann Sebastian Bach *Bachniks*; I don't suppose there is anyone in the English-speaking world who does not know what *no-goodnik* means; and unabashed homosexuals recently coined this crisp derogatory classification of heterosexuals: *straightniks*. The argot of American Jews uses *holdupnik* to describe criminal types who favour hold-ups, and *alrightnik* to sneer at the *nouveau riche*.

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Or consider the following phrasings, which are either direct transliterations from Yiddish or "Yinglish" versions thereof:

It shouldn't happen to a dog.
I should worry.
My son, the doctor.
Wear it in good health.
Enough already.
He's a regular genius.
Go hit your head against the wall.
You want it should sing, too?
With sense, he's not blessed.
Who needs *it?*
O.K. by me.
He knows from nothin'.
How come only five?
From that he makes a living?
It's a nothing of a costume.
You should excuse the expression.

Or consider the linguistic *devices*, clearly Yiddish in origin, that are employed in current English vernacular to convey vivid nuances of affection, compassion, displeasure, scepticism, ridicule, sarcasm, scorn:

1. Blithe dismissal via repetition with a *sh* play-on-the-first-sound: "Fat-shmat, as long as she's happy."

2. Mordant syntax: "Smart, he isn't."

3. Withering sarcasm via innocuous diction: "He only tried to shoot himself."

4. Scorn through reversed word order: "Already you're discouraged?"

5. Contempt via deadpan affirmation: "My son-in-law he wants to be!"

6. Fearful curses sanctioned by nominal cancellation: "He should just drop dead, God forbid!"

7. Politeness expedited by truncated compound verbs and eliminated prepositions: "You want a cup coffee?"

8. Derisive dismissal disguised as innocent interrogation: "I should pay him for such devoted service?"

9. The use of a question to answer a question to which the answer is so self-evident that the use of the first question (by you) constitutes an affront (to me) best erased either by (*a*) repeating the original question or (*b*) retorting with a question of comparably asinine self-answeringness. Thus:

A.

Q. "Did you write your mother?"
A. "Did I write my mother" (Scornful, for "Of course I did!"

B.

Q. "Have you visited your father in the hospital?"
A. "Have I visited my father in the *hospital*?" (Indignant, for "What kind of a monster do you think I am?")

C.

Q. "Would you like some chicken soup?"
A. "Would I like some *chicken* soup?" (Emphatically concurring, for "What a stupid thing to ask.")

D.

Q. 'Will a hundred dollars be enough?"
A. "Will a hundred dollars be enough." (Incredulously offended, for "Do you think I'm crazy to accept so ridiculous a sum?")

E.

Q. "Will a thousand dollars be enough?"
A. "Will a *thousand* dollars be enough?" (Incredulously delighted, for "Man, will it!"

F.

Q. "Will you marry me?"
A. "Will I *marry* you?" (On a note of overdue triumph, for "Yes, yes, right away!")

Or consider the growing effect on English of those subtle shadings of meaning, and those priceless nuances of contempt, that are achieved in Yiddish simply by shifting the stress in a simple sentence from one word to another. Example: "Him you *trust*?" is entirely different, and worlds removed, from "*Him* you trust?" The first questions your judgment; the second vilipends the character of the scoundrel anyone must be an idiot to repose faith in.

MORE THAN ONE philologist has commented on the number of Yiddish words and idioms that have "invaded" English. I am not at all sure that "invade" is the proper verb: English, far from being a supine language, has long and exuberantly borrowed a marvellous gallimaufry of foreign words and locutions; and who can deny that such brigandage has vastly enriched our cherished tongue?[1]

But what no one, so far as I know, has noted is the number of Yiddish-in-English words you

[1] I have elsewhere pointed out that a sentence like: *"The pistol in our bungalow is stuffed with taffy"* contains words from no less than six languages: Slavic, Czech, Hindustani, Tagalog, Old French, English—via Old Frisian; and that an utterance such as *"Some nitwit has put alcohol in the ketchup!"* entails the uncopyrighted usage of Dutch, Arabic, French, Malay, Chinese, and pidgin Japanese.

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cannot find in English dictionaries (including the 13-volume *O.E.D.*), nor in our best compendia of slang and unconventional English (including Partridge), nor in special studies of the "American" language (including H. L. Mencken). It is surely startling to discover that *shamus*, or *shammes*, which recurs in innumerable detective stories as a name for a "private eye" or a detective, cannot be found in either the *Oxford Dictionary of the English Language* or in H. L. Mencken's *The American Language*. *Shlemiel* is not in the *O.E.D.*, nor in Mencken—whether spelled *shlemiel, shlemiehl, schlemiel* or *schlemiehl*. The reader who wants a definition or etymology of these (and many other) Yiddish words is driven to dictionaries of Yiddish or German.[2]

The deeper I wandered in this barren reference world, the more frustrated I became. Again and again I ran across statements that *Webster's Unabridged Dictionary* contains "almost" "more than," or "about" 500 Yiddish words. I have no notion whether this is true, but I doubt it. I certainly doubt that anyone has actually counted that number of Yiddish words in *Webster's Unabridged*, or has gone through that entire fat volume for that purpose. What I do know, after five years of research, is how very many Yiddish words and phrases are thriving beautifully in English today—and are not included in the *O.E.D.*, *Webster's Collegiate World, Funk and Wagnalls*, etc., nor in standard reference works on the English language.

I was driven to write the book I wanted myself, and have titled it *The Joys of Yiddish*. The lexicon is a collection of certain foreign-born words which:

1. are part of everyday English (*schmaltz* or *shmaltz, gonif, bagel, kibitzer*);
2. are rapidly becoming accepted in English usage (*chutzpa, shlep, yenta, meshugge, nosh, megillah*);
3. and, perhaps more interesting, *should be* part of our noble tongue, in my opinion, because no English words so exactly, subtly, picturesquely, or decisively convey their meaning (*shmooze, kvetch, shlimazl, tchotchke*, etc.).[3]

The words in my dictionary are not all straight Yiddish. They are Yiddish, Hebrew, and what I call Yinglish and Ameridish: Yinglish being neologisms used in both the U.S. and the U.K.: *fin* (five), *kibitzer, etc.*; Ameridish meaning words coined by, and indigenous to, Jews in the United States: *e.g., utz* (goad), *nexdoorikeh* (female neighbour), *kochalayn* (Catskill summer-resort room or bungalow with cooking facilities).

As FOR THE DIFFERENCE between Yiddish and Hebrew, a note is in order, considering the widespread misconceptions and confusions:

1. Yiddish is not Hebrew: it uses the letters of the Hebrew alphabet, a good many Hebrew words, and is written and printed from right to left, as is Hebrew. But Yiddish is as different from Hebrew as English is from, say, French, which together proceed from left to right and contain many word-roots in common.

2. A knowledge of Yiddish does not provide the faintest understanding of Hebrew, nor does a knowledge of Hebrew help much in understanding Yiddish.

3. "Yiddish" is not a synonym for "Jewish." Yiddish is the name of a language; there is no language called Jewish, strictly speaking, any more than there is a language called "Canadian" or "Baptist." The word "Yiddish" comes from the German *jüdisch*, which means "Jewish." (Since "Yiddish," in Yiddish, means "Jewish," it is not surprising that Jews often say "a Jewish newspaper" or "a Jewish book" to mean one composed in Yiddish.)

4. Yiddish is not a "new" language or a "mere" dialect. It is older than the English we speak today. Yiddish was born about 900 years ago, when Jews from northern France migrated to towns along the Rhine. These Jews spoke French and, of course, Hebrew. In their new communities, they began to use the local Germanic vernacular. For the centuries thereafter, most male Jews could handle at least three languages: Hebrew, the language of the Torah and the Talmud; Yiddish, the language of the home; and the language of the country in which they lived: Greek, Russian, Polish, Turkish, or whatever.

[2] There is no shortage of the latter; but a usable English-Yiddish dictionary with words and definitions spelled out in English has not existed until a month ago, when McGraw-Hill published the excellent lexicon by the late Professor Uriel Weinreich. Until now, the standard Yiddish-English dictionary was a huge and rather quaint one (edited by a staff under Paul Abelson) published in 1914, or the pioneer Alexander Harkavy volume published in 1891.

[3] *Shmooze*, a warm, heart-to-heart talk. *Kvetch*, to squeeze, a constant complainer, *Shlimazl*, one with chronic hard luck. *Tchotchke*, a toy, a gadget, a frivolous girl, a mistress.

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5. This new parlance of the Jews combined Middle-High German with some Old German, remnants of Old French and Old Italian (!), many Hebrew names and Hebrew phrases—plus the dialects of the Rhineland. This *patois* spread with the Jews' wanderings, and took root in the ghettos, which began in Spain as far back as the 13th century, in walled Jewish sections or *Juderias*.[4]

6. Yiddish did not break away from its Germanic origins until after the 15th century, when the Jews went to Eastern Europe—to Poland, Galicia, Rumania, Russia, Hungary. And there, as the Jews adapted themselves to their new universe, their *mama loshen* ("mother's tongue")—which is what they called Yiddish (Jewish females were rarely permitted to learn the "sacred tongue," Hebrew) —began to pick up the new words and phrases and locutions, adapting itself to the streets and the market-places. Yiddish has matured steadily ever since—although it did not come fully into its own, building a literature of its own, until the middle of the 19th century.

7. The vocabulary of Yiddish is about 15% Hebrew (often pronounced on the penultimate syllable, rather than the final one), 75% German-origin and 10% English, Yinglish, Slavic, etc. Estimates by experts vary around these percentages.

8. Yiddish was (and is) by no means understood or used by all Jews. It is the language of the Ashkenazim, the Eastern European Jews, and their descendants. It is totally incomprehensible to Jews in many lands, and to vast numbers of Israelis (see below).

9. Yiddish has long been beset by schisms and fevers and ambivalences from within its own community. Jewish purists derided Yiddish for its "bastard origins," "vulgar" idioms, "hybrid vocabulary"; Hebraicists have long called Yiddish "uncivilised" cant; German Jews, who despised the Ashkenazim, called Yiddish "a barbarous argot" and a "piggish jargon." (They forgot that English, French, Italian, German, too, began as the vernacular of the people.)

10. The official language of Israel is Hebrew. In Israel, Yiddish has long been accorded short shrift—officially and unofficially. Many Israelis loathe the tongue and refuse to speak it; and many who do understand it, refuse to acknowledge that they do. (In Israel, my questions in Yiddish were often answered in English.) This is not only because of the German origin and sound of the language, and the understandable revulsion this precipitates among those whose memories of Hitlerism do not predispose them to kindly responses to anything Teutonic, but because Yiddish is regarded as a *passé* jargon, an historical accident, a despised dialect. Professor Max Weinreich's epigram is apposite: "A language is a dialect—with an army and a navy." Yiddish has no army, navy, or governmental mandate.

The fraternal disaffections that exist between Hebraicists and Yiddishists is illustrated in a joke I heard in Jerusalem:

> On a bus in Tel Aviv, a mother was talking animatedly in Yiddish to her little boy—who kept answering her in Hebrew. And each time the mother earnestly said: "No, no. Talk Yiddish!"
>
> A native Israeli, in the seat behind her, finally leaned forward and exclaimed: "Lady, why do you insist the boy speak Yiddish instead of Hebrew?"
>
> The mother replied: "Because I don't want him to forget he's a Jew."

The mother understood what Israel Zangwill meant when he defined Yiddish as the language that "incorporates the essence of a life which is distinctive and unlike any other."

11. Many English words were drafted into Yiddish by Jewish immigrants to England and the United States. Pronunciation was necessarily determined by the pronunciational patterns of Yiddish itself, and by the habituated reflexes of the Jewish tongue and larynx. And so it was that proud new patriots in London or New York, Manchester or Chicago, swiftly enlarged their Yinglish vocabularies with such useful, everyday English words as:

kvinn (queen)
ondegront (underground)
lendler (landlord)
singlemon (unmarried male)
boardekeh (female boarder)
sharopnikel (baby pacifier; it made babies "shut up")
tex (tax)
sax (sex)

It was élitist naïveté, in both England and the United States, rigidly regarding speech as an index of culture, that misled the English and

[4] The Lateran Councils of 1179 and 1215 forbade Jews to live close to Christians; officially segregated quarters for Jews were ordered in the papal states by Pope Paul IV in 1555.

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the Americans about the presumed intellectual "poverty" of immigrants who spoke such quaint, broken English.[5] (Every Jewish boy for centuries had begun to be instructed in Hebrew as soon as he had the capacity to learn—as early as 3 or 4, and rarely as late as 7.)

I CALL Yiddish "the Robin Hood of languages." It has stolen right and left from its richer neighbours, and showed not the slightest hesitation in taking in house guests—who never left and were often transformed. A delightful remark, credited to Charles Rappaport, runs: "I speak ten languages—all of them in Yiddish."

I think it a tongue of exceptional charm, vigour, resilience and sheer winningness. It contains an extraordinary range of observational and psychological subtleties. It is steeped in emotion, and sluiced with sarcasm. It is rich in paradox, for Jews learned early on that only paradox can do justice to the injustices of life. It hones the knife-edge of moral outrage on ingenious steels of irony; irony was one way Jews could retain their sanity. Sarcasm is a protective ploy—conveying nominal acquiescence to power, with private reservations. And Yiddish is, of course, notable for rampant sentimentality: it is rich in words to express feeling, compassion, pathos—not to say bathos—that are somewhat alien to Anglo-Saxon tastes. Even as a child I marvelled at the exhilarating mixtures of affect Yiddish offered, ranging from unashamed *shmaltz* to undisguised derision.

Psychologists might well note how fertile Yiddish is in words that pin-point human character, motivation, and conduct. I know of no language so rich in a vocabulary of insight. The prolonged preoccupation of Jews with human, no less than divine, behaviour began when Moses told them of the awful importance God attached to everyday conduct, and impressed them with their special mission, and the high moral, no less than religious, purpose for which they would be held to account. Knowledge, among Jews, came to be a treasured compensation for their subjugation and a holy substitute for worldly rewards. Appalling adversities made insight a substitute for weapons: one way to escape the pogromers' wrath was to anticipate their actions by knowing them better than they knew themselves. Jews *had to become psychologists*: it improved their prospects for survival.

In this context, consider the subtleties of distinction Jews make among, say, dolts: *yuld, narr, klutz, Kuni Lemmel, bulvon, Chaim Yankel*, etc., or among such simpletons as a *nebbech*, a *shnook*, a *shlemiel*, a *shlimazl*, a *shmendrick*, a *doppess*. All of these inhabit the kingdom of the ineffectual, yet each is assigned a distinct place in the roll-call. Or consider the discriminatory distinctions made among braggarts: a *fifer*, a *fonfer*, a *blufer*, a *trombenik*, a *plosher*, etc. The Yiddish word *paskudnyak* is beyond peer, I think, in picturing a mean, petty, ungrateful, nasty character. And Yiddish, mourned as a dying language (it certainly is dying among Jews, at—ironically—the very time when its influence on English has never been greater) coins new words for new types with captivating felicity: A *nudnik* (a pest) becomes a *"phudnik"* (a pedantic bore) when the *nudnik* gets a Ph.D.

In trying to capture the flavour of a word, its tone and sense and innuendoes beyond literal meaning, I often found myself driven to tell a joke. Apart from providing a laugh, anecdotes are a communicative instrument of great effectiveness. A joke, like a story, is a structured form—that makes a point. And since Jews are raised to reverence learning, and early learn to hear points made via parables, the story (*myseh*) is an extremely common form of communication among Jews. The typically Jewish story is

[5] An American Brahmin, William Dean Howells, was more observant; in 1915, he wrote: "With us the popular taste is so bad, so ignorant, so vulgar, that it suggests the painful doubt whether literacy is a true test of intelligence and a rightful proof of citizenship... the literary taste of the Russian Jews on the East Side is superior to that of the average native American...."

I make no invidious comparisons between the literary taste of Americans and, say, Londoners who regarded the Jews of Whitechapel as "uncultivated." It is worth remarking that in New York the largest circulation of the classics was found in the Seward Park Branch of the public library on the Lower East Side; and that the Metropolitan Museum of Art was prevailed upon to open its doors on Sundays because of the clamouring from Jewish residents of the Lower East Side.

One of the noblest images in history, I think, was that often seen in America shortly after a Jewish family arrived. Unable to speak a word of English, the mother of the household would hasten to the nearest branch library, find the librarian, and hold up 1 or 2 or 3 fingers, the digits indicating the number of children for whom she wanted a free library card.

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at its best when it points a moral or moralises a problem.

Since humour is used by Jews as an adjunct of teaching, as part of the dialectic of pedagogy, as a device for magnifying logical distinctions or dramatising philosophical propositions, much Jewish levity involves the play of intellect. The Jewish style of humour (I believe there is a distinctive style in the humour, no less than the patterns of shame, guilt or approval, of national groups) is emphatically interpersonal. It revolves around the ambivalent relationships of men and women, parents and children, merchants and competitors, partners and customers, teachers and pupils, etc. Learning is both exalted and, when it becomes casuistry, lampooned. Humour becomes a vehicle for reason. In the hands of a writer like Sholem Aleichem, reason is driven to the ridiculous; at the hands of a misanthrope like Groucho Marx, reason is reduced to nominalism (I almost wrote "a perverse existentialism") and logic is turned mad.

And humour, of course, serves the afflicted as compensation for suffering, a token victory of brain over fear. A Jewish aphorism goes: "When you're hungry, sing; when you're hurt, laugh." To the harassed minority, the barbed joke is the final citadel in which human pride can live. "All sorrows can be borne," said Isak Dinesen, "if you put them into a story."

The profuse use of anecdotes, folk tales and jokes makes my lexicon, obviously, rather unorthodox. It does not, I trust, trespass canons of philology and lexicography. The reader may judge its merits or shortcomings for himself, from a few specimen entries.

Shnook (also spelled *shnuk*)

Pronounced to rhyme with "crook." Ameridish. Possibly from the German *schnuck*, "a kind of small sheep," or *schnucki*, the German colloquialism for "pet," a pet dog, one's "darling," or wife; but I doubt it (see below).

1. A meek patsy; a passive, unassertive, ineffectual type.
2. A "Sad Sack," more to be pitied than despised.

Shnook is almost certainly an American-Yiddish coinage. None of my informants had heard it so used in any Eastern Europe tongue, nor in German, nor in European Yiddish; and every person I questioned said he had first heard it in America.

The word was disseminated via radio and vaudeville. Thus: Jack Benny on radio, 9 October 1951: "Don't be such an apologetic *shnook*."

Kike

(Vulgarism) Yinglish. From the Yiddish: *kikel*, "circle."

A thoroughly offensive way of referring to a Jew.

Kike is meant to be contemptuous, to suggest a cheap, ill-mannered, disagreeable Jew. That is how the word was used by German Jews, starting in the late 19th century, about the poorer, "loud," "pushy" immigrants from Eastern Europe. It is sometimes heard today, to characterise someone who is vulgar, petty, or employs a trick to take advantage of you.

The origin of *kike* is fascinating. One reason advanced (for instance, by Stephen Birmingham in *Our Crowd*) is that the word derives from the fact that so many Ashkenazic names end in *sky* or *ski*; presumably the taunt *"ki-ki"* led to *"kike."* I find this quite unconvincing: the *ski* or *sky* ending is always pronounced *skee*; derisive repetition-play would surely have given us the neologism *"keekee"* or *"keek,"* not *"kike."*

The word *"kike"* was actually born on Ellis Island, when Jewish immigrants who were illiterate (or could not use English letters) refused to sign the entry-forms with the customary *"X."* Instead, they made a circle. The Yiddish word for "circle" is *kikel* (pronounced *KY-k'l*), and for "little circle" *kikeleh* (pronounced *KY-k'l-leh*). Before long, the immigration inspectors were calling anyone who signed with an *"O"* instead of an *"X"* a *kikel* or *kikeleh* or *kikee* or, finally and succinctly, a *kike*.[6]

Why did Jews make an *"O,"* never an *"X"*? Because of their profound fear of (not to say aversion to) the sign of the cross. To them, a cross represented not only the barbaric Roman form of execution, but the very sign under which they had themselves been persecuted, their ancestors slaughtered, countless pogroms sanctioned and instigated.

[6] I obtained this information through Mr. Birmingham, who shared with me a letter sent to him, after *Our Crowd* appeared, by Mr. Sidney Berry. Mr. Berry's authority for this illuminating observation was the late Philip Cowen, "dean of immigration inspectors" at Ellis Island, later founder and first editor of *The American Hebrew*.

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The substitution of the *"O"* for an *"X"* did not stop once the immigrants left Ellis Island. Shop-keepers on the lower East Side, and the pedlars who went far out into the hinterland with their wares, conducted much of their trade on credit; and these early merchants, unversed in English, often "checked off" an instalment-plan ("never-never") payment with a little circle: "I'll make you a *kikeleh*."

And so those who drew *kikelehs*, whether on Delancey Street in New York or Maxwell Street in Chicago, whether in Ohio or Kansas or the far West, came to be known as "*Kike* men" (which is what a noted authority on Yiddish tells me the miners' families of Pennsylvania's coal country called them) or *"kikes."*

Eric Partridge cites 1935 as the probable date of *kike*'s entry into English (*Dictionary of Slang and Unconventional English*, 1961, p. 1158) but that date is much, much too late. The *Oxford English Dictionary* includes *kike* in its 1961 supplemental volume. In earlier editions, *kike* appeared as an obsolete form of *kick* or *keek*, a Scottish/North England dialect word, also spelled *kyke, keke, kike*, meaning "to peep, to glance." The German *kieken*, of course, means "to peep"; the Yiddish *kick* means "look."

Another vulgar and offensive slang-word for Jew is "sheeny"—which, too, may have begun as a purely descriptive, non-pejorative word. It seems to have come from the great use Jewish pedlars and storekeepers made of the word *shayne* ("pretty, beautiful," from the German *schön*) in selling their wares. An 83-year-old friend, raised in Montana, tells me that in his youth everyone called a Mr. Levin in his town "the sheeny." It never occurred to my friend that the word was derogatory until he came to New York. He had been raised to think "sheeny" meant "Jewish." Mr. Levin was one of the most respected men in the community, descended from one of its pioneer founders.

Yenta

Pronounced *YEN-ta*, to rhyme with "bent a." *Yenta*, I am told, was a perfectly acceptable name for a lady, derived from the Italian *gentile*—until some ungracious *yenta* gave it a bad name. (So, too, the Spanish *esperanza* became the basis for the Jewish name "Shprintza," *señor* the original for "Shnaiur," and "Phoebus" the origin of "Feivish.") It is also suggested that *yenta* is an ironic corruption of the French feminine for well-bred, *gentille*, but I doubt it.

1. A woman of low origins or vulgar manners; a shrew; a shallow, coarse termagant. "She is the biggest *yenta* on the block." "She has the tact of a *yenta*."
2. A gossipy woman; a scandal-spreader; a rumourmonger; one unable to keep a secret or respect a confidence.

In this sense, men are sometimes described as *yentas*, just as one might call a male blabbermouth "an old woman."

Two *yentas* met in Miami.

"So tell me, Molly, have you been through the menopause?"

"The menopause? I haven't even been through the *Fontainebleau* yet!"

One of the more amusing buttons worn by the button-happy hippie young reads:

MARCEL PROUST
IS A
YENTA

Timtum

Pronounced *TIM-tum*, using a short *u*, to rhyme with *"rim rum."* From Hebrew (as pronounced by Polish Jews): *tum*, "a simple or stupid child."

1. An androgynous person—that is, one who has bisexual or ambiguous characteristics; one who is hard to identify as either male or female.
2. An effeminate man.
3. A beardless youth with a high-pitched voice.

In the *Mishna*, a *timtum* is a person whose sex is not determinable—because clothes conceal the genital areas.

The original meaning fanned out, and Jews would call a young man who was beardless, delicate, high-pitched of voice, "a *timtum*."

One authority informs me that in some circles *timtum* came to mean "a total loss," an unproductive, creative misfit. Thus: "He may read a lot, but he's a *timtum*," or "He can't help; he's a *timtum*."

Pisha paysha

Pronounced *PISH-eh PAY-sheh* (or *PEH-sheh*), to rhyme with "dish acacia."

A card game, played by two—one of whom is usually a child.

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It is a very simple game, often the first taught to children, particularly useful in whiling away the hours of convalescence, a good game to play with a child because a child can easily win; only luck is involved. (Jewish parents like to say *pisha paysha* is "educational" because it helps teach the young the sequence of numbers.)

The game is played this way: The deck is placed face down; one card is placed face upward; the players draw from the deck, in turn, and seek to build upward or downward upon the open card; *i.e.*, if a 5 is exposed, you may place upon it either a *4* or a *6*. The player with the fewest cards in his hand when the deck is exhausted, wins.

I was taught to play *pisha paysha* by my father, when I was six or seven. I have spent many an idle moment since then wondering what on earth *pisha paysha* means, and where on earth it originated. A dozen experts on Yiddish were unable to help me. By a feat of uncanny bookmanship (happening to open a published-in-England volume on games) I am at last able to dispel the world's ignorance: *pisha paysha* is some Jew's corruption of the name of a card game known in England as "Pitch and Patience." Some called it "Peace and Patience." In my memory, it will remain imperishably inscribed as *pisha paysha*.

Oy
Oy!
Oy oy!
Oy-oy-oy!

Pronounced—well, how else can you pronounce it? The exclamation point is part of the spelling when "oy!" has a full head of steam.

Oy! is not a word; it is a vocabulary. It is uttered in as many ways as the utterer's histrionic ability permits. It is a lament, a protest, a cry of dismay, a reflex of delight. But however sighed, cried, howled, or moaned, *oy!* is the most expressive and ubiquitous exclamation in Yiddish.

It is an expletive, an ejaculation, a threnody, a monologue. It may be employed to express anything from ecstasy to horror, depending on (*a*) the catharsis desired by the utterer, (*b*) the effect intended on the listener, (*c*) the protocol of affect that governs the intensity and duration of emotion required (by tradition) for the given occasion or crisis.

Oy is often used as lead-off for *"oy vay!"* which means, literally, "oh, pain," but is used as an all-purpose cry to express anything from trivial delight to abysmal woe. *Oy vay!* is the short form of *"oy vay iz mir!"* (pronounced "*oy VAY iz meer*"), an omnibus phrase for everything from personal pain to empathetic condolences. (*Vay* comes from the German *Weh*, meaning "woe.")

Oy is also used in duet form, *oy—oy!* or in a resourceful trio: *oy-oy-oy!* The individual *oy!*s can play varying solo roles, to embellish subtleties of feeling: thus *OY!—oy—oy* or *oy, oy, OY! OY-oy!* can mean "And how!"

It is worth noting that *oy!* is not *ai!*, and runs a decidedly different gamut of sensibilities.

Ai! is also used in tandem (*"ai-ai!"*) and *à trois,* as the French, no novitiates in the *"ai-ai-ai!"* league, would put it.

As for the difference between *oy!* and *ah!*, there is (naturally) a saying to illustrate the distinction:

> "When you jump into cold water you cry *'Oy!'* then, enjoying it, say 'A-aah.' When you commit a sin, you revel in the pleasure, 'A-aah'; then, realising what you've done, you cry *'Oy!'* "

Oy, accordingly, can be used to express:

1. Simple surprise. "When she saw me there, she said, '*Oy*, I didn't expect you!'"
2. Startledness. "She heard a noise and exclaimed, '*Oy!* Who's there?'"
3. Small fear. "*Oy!* It could be a mouse!"
4. Minor sadness (sighed). "When I think of what she went through, all I can say is *o-oy*." (Note the *oy* prolonged, to indicate how sensitive one is to the troubles of others.)
5. Contentment. "*Oy*, was that a delicious dinner!"
6. Joy. "*Oy*, what a party!"
7. Euphoria. "Was I *happy*? *Oy!* I was dancing on air!"
8. Relief; reassurance. "*Oy*, now I can sleep."
9. Uncertainty. "What should I do? *Oy*, I wish I knew."
10. Apprehension. "Maybe he's sick? *Oy!*"
11. Awe. "He came back alive yet, *Oy!*"
12. Astonishment. "*Oy gevalt*, how he had changed."
13. Indignation. "Take it away from me. *Oy!*"
14. Irritation. "*Oy*, is that a lemon!"
15. Irony. "*Oy*, have you got the wrong party!"
16. Pain (moderate). "*Oy*, it hurts."
17. Pain (serious). "*Oy, Gottenyu!*"
18. Revulsion. "*Feh!* Who could eat that; *O—oy!*"
20. Dismay. "*Oy*, I gained ten pounds!"
21. Despair. "It's hopeless, I tell you! *Oy!*"
22. Regret. "*Him* we have to invite? *Oy!*"

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23. Lamentation. "*Oy,* we cried our eyes out."
24. Shock. "What? Her? Here? *Oy!*"
25. Outrage. "That man will never set foot in this house so long as I live. *Oy!*"
26. Horror. "——married a dwarf? *Oy gevalt!*"
27. Stupefaction. "My own partner . . . *o-o-oy.*"
28. Flabbergastation. "Who ever *heard* such a thing? *Oy!* I could *plotz!*"
29. At-the-end-of-one's-wittedness, or I-can't-*stand*-any-more. "Get out! Leave me alone! *O-O-O-o-o-oy!*"

Mrs. Fishbein's phone rang.

"Hul-lo," a cultivated voice intoned, "I'm telephoning to ask whether you and your husband can come to a tea for Lady Windermere—?"

"*Oy,*" cut in Mrs. Fishbein, "have *you* got a wrong number!"

K'nocker

Pronounced *not* "nocker," but *K'NOCK-er,* with the *k* a separate sound, as in "Canute." (I make the apostrophe part of the spelling to make sure you pronounce both the *k* and the *n.*) From German: *knacken*: "to crack or snap." A *knacker* meant someone who cracked a whip, was a doer, a big shot. In Yiddish, *k'nocker* is derisive.

1. A big shot—who knows it and acts that way.
2. A boastful, cocky, self-advertising fellow; a "show-off."

The braggadocio aspect is important: a successful but modest man would never be called a *k'nocker.*

A *k'nocker* is someone who works crossword puzzles with a pen (especially if someone is watching).

During the *Yom Kippur* services, a *k'nocker* was beating his breast, praying loudly; and, carried away, cried out, "I am the lowliest of men, Lord, unworthy of Your goodness! I am a *no-goodnik,* a nobody, a nothing!"

Next to the *k'nocker,* the poor *shammes* (sexton), too, was beating his breast and chanting his deficiencies. "Forgive me, O Lord, I'm a nothing."

The *k'nocker* promptly protested: "Look who claims he's a nothing!"

Two Jewish *k'nockers,* approaching Honolulu, got into an argument about the correct pronunciation of Hawaii: One was sure it was "Ha*w*aii," the other *positive* it was "Ha*v*aii." They made a bet.

When they got off the plane, they hurried over to the first native they saw and said, "Aloha! How do you pronounce the name of this island: Ha*w*aii or Ha*v*aii?"

"Ha*v*aii," said the native.

"Thank you."

"You're velcome."

Doppess

Pronounced *DOP-pess,* to rhyme with "mopless." Not Hebrew but Ameridish: a local coinage of the garment centre in New York.

Useless but commiserating bystander; ineffectual observer who is of little help.

This Yiddish word, known only in America, was born in New York's garment centre, of unknown parents, in some obscure loft—possibly as a more scornful version of dope, *shlemiel, shmegegge.*

Doppess served a need for those who wanted a word to convey, with both precision and subtlety, a character type known in all cultures: the useless observer who, in a crisis, does nothing more than offer obligatory sympathy.

My erudite friend Professor Daniel Bell tells me that a Seventh Avenue lexicographer once defined *doppess* for him with picturesque gestures: "The *shlemiel* is the pants-presser who always drops the hot iron off the ironing board. The *shlimazl* is the *shmo* on whose foot the iron always falls. And the *doppess* is the one who says, 'Tsk, tsk!' "

The man who habitually clucks "Tsk, tsk!" is also called a *tsitser.*

"One man chops the wood, the other does all the grunting."—FOLK SAYING.

Chutzpa (noun)
chutspa
chutzpadik (adjective)

Pronounced *KHOOTS-pah*; rattle that *kh* around with fervour; rhymes with "Foot spa." Do *not* pronounce the *ch* as in "choo-choo" or "Chippewa," but as the German *ch* in *Ach!* or the Scottish in *loch.*

Hebrew: "insolence," "audacity."

Gall, brazen nerve, effrontery, incredible "guts"; presumption-plus-arrogance such as no other word, and no other language, can do justice to.

The classic explanation for *chutzpa* is, of course, this: *Chutzpa* is that quality enshrined in a

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man who, having killed his mother and father, throws himself on the mercy of the court because he is an orphan.

A *chutzpanik* may be defined as the man who shouts "Help! Help!" while beating you up.

IN PARIS, a plump Brooklyn *touristeh* entered a fine linen shop and, fingering a lace tablecloth, asked the proprietress the price thusly: *"Combien pour cette tishtoch* (tablecloth)?"

"Cinquante francs, madame."

"Cinquante francs?" echoed the American. *"Mais, c'est une shmatte* (rag)!"

The *baleboosteh* drew herself up in high dudgeon. *"Une shmatte, madame? Quelle chutzpa!"*

A WOMAN, feeling sorry for a beggar who had come to her door, invited him in and offered him food. On the table was a pile of dark bread—and a few slices of *challa* (soft, braided white bread, made with egg added to the flour). The *shnorrer* (beggar) promptly fell upon the *challa*.

"There's black bread, too," the woman hinted.

"I prefer *challa*."

"But *challa* is much more expensive!"

"Lady," said the beggar, "it's worth it."

That, I think, is *chutzpa*.

A CHUTZPANIK, having dined well in a restaurant, summoned the proprietor, to whom he said as follows, "My friend, I enjoyed your food, but to tell you the truth, I haven't a penny to my name. Wait: Don't be angry! Hear me out. I am, by profession, a beggar. I happen to be an extremely talented *shnorrer*. I can go out and within an hour *shnorr* the entire amount I owe you. But naturally, you can't trust me to come back. I understand. You'll be well advised to come with me and not let me out of your sight for a minute, right? But can a man like you, a well-known restaurateur, be seen in the company of a man who is *shnorring*? Certainly not! So, I have the perfect solution. I'll wait here—and you go out and *shnorr* until you have the cost of this dinner!"

That, certainly, is *chutzpa*.

A FRIEND OF MINE records that in a Jewish restaurant he once asked a passing waiter: "What time is it?"

Icily, the waiter said, "You aren't my table."

Bagel

Pronounced *BAY-g'l*, to rhyme with "Hegel." From German, *Beugel*, "a round loaf of bread."

A hard, tyre-shaped roll, simmered in hot water for two minutes before baking, then glazed with egg white.

Bagels are known as doughnuts with a college education.

Because *bagels* were made of white flour, they were considered great delicacies in Eastern Europe, where the poor Jews (and most Jews were very poor, indeed) ate black bread except on the Sabbath, when "the queen of breads," *challa*, was eaten.

A *bagel* was supposed to be lucky, because it is round. Don't feel superior: no less sophisticated a people than the Greeks thought a circle "the perfect" form, because it had neither beginning nor end; therefore God, being perfect, chose the circle as the basic form in constructing the universe. The orbits of the stars and planets were assumed to be circular. Even Aristotle thought so, and so did Ptolemy, and so did Copernicus, who nearly drove himself crazy trying to rearrange Ptolemy's elaborate observations into a new set of circles with epicentres. (The mystical assumption about circles plagued and stymied astronomers until Kepler.)

Bagels and hard-boiled eggs were traditionally served in Jewish homes after a funeral, for they were thought to symbolise the unending "round" processes of life and the world. The custom may have developed from interpretations of the passage in *Ecclesiastes*: "One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh: but the earth abideth for ever."

The first printed mention of *bagels*, by the way, is to be found in the Community Regulations of Cracow, Poland, for the year 1610—which stated that *bagels* would be given as a gift to any woman in childbirth.

Bagel and lox (smoked salmon) as part of the "traditional" Sunday morning breakfast for Jews is certainly widespread, but not traditional. It is a triumph of cuisine invented in New York: slices of tender lox, topping a layer of sweet butter on which cream cheese has been lathered, the whole enclosed by a toasted *bagel*.

A YIDDISH EXPRESSION: *"Er ligt in erd und bakt bagel,"* is readily translated as "He lies in the ground and bakes *bagels*." But what

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does that mean? "He's not doing so well, poor chap."

A MAN FROM MARS landed on Second Avenue and looked into a store window, fascinated. Finally, he entered the shop and asked the owner:

"What are those little wheels in the window?"

"Wheels? What wheels?"

The Martian pointed.

"Those aren't wheels," smiled the *baleboss*. "They're called *bagels*. We eat them.... Here, try one."

The Martian bit into a *bagel* and smacked his lips. "Man! This would go great with cream cheese and lox."

Cockamamy

Pronounced *COCK-a-may-me,* to rhyme with "lock a Mamie." Derivation: dubious. Ameridish, or children's argot.

1. Mixed-up, muddled; ridiculous, implausible; not credible, foolishly complicated. Did you ever hear such a *cockamamy* story?" "Of all the *cockamamy* excuses I ever heard."

This is not Hebrew and not Yiddish, but (I believe) Amerid. H. L. Mencken's *Dictionary of American English*, surprisingly, does not list *cockamamy*. Neither does Eric Partridge, *Dictionary of Slang*. Nor, to my chagrin, does the comprehensive Berrey and Van den Bark *American Thesaurus of Slang*.

I never heard *cockamamy* used in Chicago, but have often encountered it in New York. It is a pungent adjective of disesteem.

2. Decalcomania: *i.e.*, a picture or design left on the skin as a "transfer," from specially prepared paper which is wetted and rubbed.

I am informed by veterans of the Lower East Side that decalcomania pictures were called "cockamamies" because no one knew how to spell "decalcomania." That's not as *cockamamy* a feat of etymology as you might think; I have found none better.

In the movie *Teacher's Pet* (1958), Clark Gable used *cockamamy* with scornful relish to dismiss an idea as totally absurd, desperately invented.

Shtik; shtikl; (diminutive); ***shtikele*** (more diminutive); ***shtiklech*** (plural).

Pronounced to rhyme respectively with "quick," "pickle," piccolo" (with an (*eh* at the end instead of the *o*); the last, *shtiklech,* rhymes with nothing I can conjure up. Just be sure to pronounce that final *ch* as a German actor would.

1. A piece; a little.
   "Give him a *shtik* cake." (Never say a *shtik* "of" anything.)
   "She's a *shtik* crazy." (She's a little crazy.)
2. A part, part of.
   "He played a *shtik* Mendelssohn."
3. Something inferior, incomplete, insufficient.
   "What *shtik* junk is this?"
4. A prank, a piece of clowning.
   "He made us laugh with his *shtik*."
   "You never saw a man with so many *shtik* (or *shtiklech*.)"
5. A piece of misconduct.
   "In company, one should not perpetrate a *shtik* like that."
6. A devious trick; a bit of cheating.
   "How did you ever fall for a *shtik* like that?"
7. A studied, contrived or characteristic piece of "business" employed by an actor or actress. Overly-used gestures, grimaces or devices to steal attention.
   "Watch him use the same *shtik*."
   "The characterisation would come off better without *shtiklech*."
   "Play this straight: no *shtiklech,* please."

The last usage is spreading far beyond Broadway and Hollywood circles, where I first heard it.

Shtikl is the diminutive of *shtik* and means, simply: A small or little piece. "Have a *shtikl* cake."

Shtikele is a further diminutive for *shtikl,* hence means: A really *small* little piece. "*Shtiklech* and *breklech*" means "odds and ends."

A WOMAN in a delicatessen saw some small pickles on the counter, under a sign *"Nosh."* "How much costs today a pickle?" she asked.

"A pickle," said the man behind the counter, "is a nickel."

"A *nickel*?... So tell me: How much is this *shtikl*?"

"That *shtikl*—is a nickel."

"My God!... And this *pickeleh*?"

"That *pickeleh*," said the owner, "is a *nickeleh*!"

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Kibosh

Pronounced *KY-bosh,* to rhyme with "my gosh." Derivation: mysterious.

1. Nonsense, "bosh" (when used as a noun; this was the 19th-century usage); but
2. "To put the *kibosh* on," which is the way the word is used today, means to arrange things so that something will not occur; to put an end to something; to "jinx" something so that it will fail or not take place; to spoil; to impair; to squelch; to veto. "His decision put the *kibosh* on all our hopes and plans."

(*A*) The *Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology* (ed. C. T. Onions) says *kibosh* is of uncertain origin. Dickens used *kibosh* in 1856, the word at that time meaning "nonsense" or "bosh."

(*B*) *Webster's Unabridged Dictionary* (3rd edn.), notes that *kibosh*'s ancestry is unknown.

(*C*) The *Oxford English Dictionary* says that *kibosh* is of "heraldic" origin, which, put that laconically, is no help.

(*D*) Eric Partridge, in his *Dictionary of Slang and Unconventional English*, agrees with the *O.E.D.* (above) but says that "to put the *kibosh* on," meaning to seal the doom of, comes from Yiddish; he offers no evidence.

(*E*) Padraic Colum, the Irish poet, asserts that *kibosh* comes from Irish Gaelic *cie báis*, meaning "cap of death." (*Bais* is pronounced "bawsh" in Gaelic.)

(*F*) In *Phrase and Word Origins*, Alfred H. Holt says that a "Mr. Loewe, who ought to know," traces *kibosh* to a Yiddish word "formed from four consonants, representing eighteen-pence. When, at a small auction, an eager bidder jumped his offer to eighteen-pence, he was said to have 'put the *kibosh*' on his fellow-bidders." But what are those "four consonants," and why did they represent "eighteen-pence"?

One suggestion is that *kibosh* is an acronym comprised of the initial letters of three Yiddish words for "18 British coins." In Hebrew, *chai* was often used to signify 18; the *sh* might be the initial sound of the word *shekel*; but this linguistic reconstruction falls down on the "b" sound. (It might stand for "British," but would not the acronym then be "ki*b*rosh?") The number 18 possessed magical properties, since the letter equivalents formed the word "life." Thus, by extension, its use could presumably put the "hex" on an opponent.

(*G*) *Webster's New Dictionary of the American Language* says of *kibosh*: "earlier . . . *kybosh*, prob. Yid?" which puts it indecisively, and proceeds to cite Germanic possibilities I find no more impressive. (Why should *kiebe*, which means "carrion" in Middle High German, lead to *kibosh*?)

(*H*) H. L. Mencken records the fact that *kibosh* was included in a glossary of about one hundred and twenty-five Americanisms that were added to Sinclair Lewis' *Babbitt* when it was published in England in 1922. But Mencken did not stick his neck out anent *kibosh*'s parentage.

(*I*) William and Mary Morris, in their *Dictionary of Word and Phrase Origins*, repeat the Yiddish-origin and Gaelic-origin attributions of this tantalising word, and conclude that *kibosh* has "according to H. L. Mencken, been widely used in America for more than a century."

(*J*) The admirably comprehensive *American Thesaurus of Slang*, by Berrey and Van den Bark, includes several uses of *kibosh*, and even gives us a noun I never heard of: *kiboshery*, meaning "nonsense."

(*K*) Julian Franklyn, author of *A Dictionary of Rhyming Slang*, suggests that *kibosh* originated in the heraldic *caboshed* or *caboched*.

Now, why do I bother you with this *megillah* for a word that may not come from Yiddish at all?

(1) Because I always assumed that *kibosh* has a Jewish mother or father: it sounds mighty close to the name of a Hungarian or Rumanian card game, *Kalabriasz* (mispronounced *Klabiotch* by Jews), I used to see old men play when I was a boy.

(2) I wanted to leave you with one little example of the prolonged, irksome, frustrating and unbelievable *tsuris* to which a writer subjects himself when he rashly undertakes to write an article such as this.

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Richard Mayne

Maigret and the Happening

With apologies to Georges Simenon and to the author of "Le fil de l'epée."

IT WAS ONE of those scorching spring days in Paris when summer seems like a guest arrived too early, welcome but disconcerting. The leaves on the trees were still pale green, but limp with heat. Men in shirt-sleeves mopped their foreheads. Women in bright cotton dresses fanned themselves with damp hands. It was beautiful, but sticky and oppressive. It was too much.

But the heat was not what chiefly troubled Maigret. Much more, it was the strange spectacle of the Latin Quarter in this bright May sunshine.

As a young police inspector, he had sometimes envied the life of students at the Sorbonne, hurrying to lectures with their books strapped together, hunched over café tables, arguing endlessly, or locked in passionate embraces with their girl-friends, in broad daylight, mouth to mouth, shameless, free. It had been a world apart, and yet familiar, one that he might have shared. It was as much a part of Paris as the Montmartre dance-halls, the nightly bustle of *les Halles*, the lovers and fishermen on the banks of the Seine.

Now, it was all changing. *Les Halles* were moving to some anonymous suburb, and the Seine was flanked by urban motorways. Only Montmartre was much as it always had been—but now Montmartre seemed to have come to the Sorbonne. It was as if the whole Latin Quarter had become the site of some gigantic cabaret, a violent, surrealist drama with actors in bizarre costumes mouthing incomprehensible words.

Once, a few years back, a cousin of Mme Maigret's, who lived in Nevers, had come to spend the weekend at their apartment in the Boulevard Richard-Lenoir. He was a dry, bony little man with steel-rimmed spectacles and wiry grizzled hair, a widower without children, who taught in a local school. For Maigret, it had been a very long weekend. Like a true visitor from the provinces, the cousin had wanted to see all the latest sights.

"No, no, *cher ami*, I insist. This is my pleasure. This is on me."

They had had to give up their Friday evening cinema and go to the theatre, to see the current *avant-garde* play.

"Magnificent, isn't it? So wonderfully challenging. . . ."

Maigret had sunk down in his seat, his eyes half-closed. Vaguely, he remembered red and black flags, men in helmets and shiny black raincoats carrying dustbin-lids, the boom of a loudspeaker, muffled explosions, screams, sirens, the smell of gunpowder drifting across the footlights. Property trees and scenery had been demolished, a real car had been driven across the stage. Actors had appeared in the middle of the audience, shouting slogans. All the lights had gone on and off.

That night, timidly, Mme Maigret had asked what he thought of it. He had grunted, turned over, and dreamed of stage revolutionaries in well-tailored rags.

"Look out! Here they come!"

Shouts, a clatter of feet, police-whistles, a bitter whiff of tear-gas, and a group of long-haired youths or girls—which were they?—dashed past. On their heels came the helmeted riot squad, hitting out with their truncheons. Was Maigret mistaken, or were the police as uncontrollable, even as scared, as the students? Cramming his bulky figure into a doorway, feeling rather ridiculous, Maigret watched the running battle. His eyes were watering. Covering his nose with a handkerchief, he groped his

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way back to a quieter street. It was time to be off. That very day, he was due to go abroad on an official mission. With any luck, it would all be over when he returned. . . .

"Looks pretty ugly, chief."

The plump Torrence stood before him, his bushy eyebrows knitted, his face strained and tired.

"I did what I could, but with the workers out too. . . ."

"You did well."

". . . I thought you'd better come back early."

"I know."

Maigret spoke over his shoulder. He was staring out of the window, moodily. In the sunshine, the dusty smears on the glass gave it a bluish tinge.

"I suppose I'd better talk to them."

"Well. . . ."

It was what they expected of him. But Maigret felt awkward, back in this theatrical Paris of barricades and scrawled slogans, with factories closed and no trains or buses, halfway between a revolution and a fairground. He felt, somehow, like a playwright brought on to the stage for a curtain-call at a first night when things had gone badly—too conspicuous in evening clothes and without make-up, amid the actors in their costumes and grease-paint.

"All right, I'll talk to them."

"I knew you would."

But Maigret's instinct had not been mistaken.

That night, he knew he had done badly. In the unreal world of the arc-lights, the real man had seemed false, drab, remote. His words had lacked conviction. For once, he had felt old. In a few years it would be time for retirement. Was that, perhaps, what they were waiting for? Next day, the press was scornful and cruel.

Mme Maigret was indignant.

"It's not fair."

But even Mme Maigret had seemed disappointed, protective. At the office, Maigret was heavy and silent, and they avoided the subject. He could imagine what they were saying behind his back:

"Careful—he's like a bear with a sore head. . . ."

And like a bear he lumbered about his business. There was plenty of routine work, dossiers to be looked at, reports to be checked. Maigret was brooding. But not over what had happened. He was brooding over what was to be done.

It had happened before that Maigret had had doubts. In the middle of a case, quite suddenly, he would feel the need to start again from the beginning. He would want to immerse himself in the world about him, to absorb the atmosphere like a sponge. At such times, he would plunge his hands deep in his pockets, puff slowly on his pipe, and stump off down the street like a sleepwalker, scarcely aware of the crowds, the housewives with their prams and shopping bags, the office-workers going to lunch, the children playing, the cars hurrying importantly from one traffic-light to the next.

These were the moments when Maigret would "disappear."

Sometimes, later, he would try to explain. It was as if he were ashamed of his absences.

"I was reviewing all the possibilities," he might say. But he convinced no one, least of all himself. There was no logic to it. There was just an almost physical necessity to find himself, to feel his way into the case. To feel, not to think.

"I never have ideas," he once said.

So it was that Maigret "disappeared."

"I'm going home," he told them. That was the last they saw of him, climbing heavily into the car. Later, they telephoned to Boulevard Richard-Lenoir.

"He's not back yet. Isn't he with you?"

"But. . . ."

"He's not here, I tell you."

"Then where. . . .? Never mind. We'll ring again."

But when they next telephoned there was still no news. What had happened? For a while, there was consternation. Had he left the country? Had he perhaps gone for good? The bushy-eyebrowed Torrence was inclined to think so. But Lucas remained sceptical, and Janvier, as usual, was ice-cool.

"He'll be back, sure as fate."

In reality, he had gone to see the flying squad.

At the head of "the troops," as he called them, lined up at attention alongside their vehicles, was their commander, Maigret's old colleague and rival, his rugged face weather-beaten, glistening with perspiration he was too

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proud to wipe off. There was a smell of dust and petrol that reminded Maigret of North Africa. Underfoot, the tarmac was soft and tacky, corrugated by caterpillar tracks, with here and there a dark oil-stain like a bruise. Maigret felt the shirt sticking to his shoulders. Would the heat never stop?

"Well, all in order?"

"Ready any time you say the word, chief."

Maigret gave his instructions.

"But no rough stuff, mind you. Just stand by."

"You can rely on me, chief."

"I know I can . . . now."

Quite suddenly, Maigret felt relieved, but also somehow troubled. For a moment, the two men looked at each other. Was it just a suspicion, or was there the ghost of a wink? Afterwards, Maigret could never be certain, but for a moment he had the feeling that a duel had been fought, almost a bargain struck. He had a feeling of . . . yes, complicity, that was the word. But nothing was said.

He held out his hand. A dry, rough paw grasped it. Strange, to feel so dry in all this heat. Surely his own palm was a little moist?

"By the way. . . ." He turned aside, speaking as if to himself. "I'll see to the amnesty."

"There's really no. . . ."

"I'll see to it." He walked back to the car. His pipe had gone out. Pressing the warm ashes with his thumb, he relit it.

"To the Brasserie Dauphine," he told the driver. He felt like a cool beer.

"He's back."

The word passed round rapidly. Nobody knew where he had been, but it was a new Maigret that greeted them—or the old Maigret revived. They all recognised the symptoms. Now was the time when things began to move rapidly. Now, it was a question of skill and muscle. The fish had bitten. All that remained was to haul it in.

"Torrence, Janvier, Lucas. . . ."

They stood watching him as he paced up and down, jabbing with his pipe.

"I want motor-coaches, tricolour flags, megaphones. Have your men line the Champs-Elysées. No helmets—this demonstration is ours. Get the petrol-pumps working in time for the weekend, that'll cool things off. And tell the radio to stand by."

The microphone was heavy and old-fashioned. It stood on the desk like a miniature meat-safe on stilts. When they shut the windows, the room was suddenly hushed.

"May we have some level, please, sir?"

Maigret grunted. There was always this palaver. But it was worse in the heat and dazzle of the television lamps. Maigret had always disliked the busy fingers of the make-up girl, the smell of grease-paint, the soft pat of the powder-puff. At least radio was better than that. In any case, no one would be watching now. They were all outside with their transistor sets, the sound booming in unison from a thousand tiny loudspeakers.

"The Communists. . . ."

He heard his own voice speaking the words, yet somehow he hardly believed them. Torrence had talked with the Communists, at a meeting in the rue de Grenelle. Nothing could have been more orderly, more correct, less revolutionary.

As a young inspector, Maigret had come to know the owners of the shady bars, resorts of tarts and their protectors, in the side streets near the Place Pigalle. Ex-boxers, second-hand car salesmen, gamblers, they were always helpful, almost over-eager. None of them wanted trouble with the police. Behind the counter, there were rows of gaudy-labelled bottles, signed photographs of cycling champions, professional footballers, ageing music-hall stars. When Maigret ordered a *fine* or a calvados—

"Have this on the house, inspector. . . ."

And they would eye him warily, respectfully, always a little too ready to smile.

It was rather like that with the Communists. They too wanted no trouble. In a curious way, despite their slogans, they were on his side. They needed each other, but neither could admit it—that was part of the unspoken pact. For the moment they would serve as a scapegoat. But the real enemy was elsewhere.

"Eh bien, non!"

That was the heart of what he had to say. No. No to the barricades, to the slogans. No to the strike pickets, to the occupation of the Sorbonne. No to those imbeciles of long-haired students who thought they were Latin-Americans or Chinamen. No to drugs, free love, intellectuals, Molotov cocktails. No to the doubtful characters from the Paris underworld—or from Katanga—no to the faded politicians, no to foreign professors, no to agitators from Ger-

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De Tocqueville (1848) . . .

Paris (1848)

THE GENERAL APPEASEMENT *and flatness led me to believe for a long time that I was destined to spend my life amid an enervated and peaceful society. Indeed, anyone who had only examined the inside of the governmental fabric would have had the same conviction. Everything there seemed combined to produce with the machinery of liberty a preponderance of royal power which verged upon despotism; and, in fact, this result was produced almost without effort by the regular and tranquil movement of the machine. King Louis-Philippe was persuaded that, so long as he did not himself lay hand upon that fine instrument, and allowed it to work according to rule, he was safe from all peril. His only occupation was to keep it in order, and to make it work according to his own views, forgetful of society, upon which this ingenious piece of mechanism rested. He resembled the man who refused to believe that his house was on fire, because he had the key to it in his pocket.*

I HAVE ALWAYS OBSERVED *that in politics people were often ruined through possessing too good a memory. . . . So true is it that, if humanity be always the same, the course of history is always different, that the past is not able to teach us much concerning the present, and that those old pictures, when forced into new frames, never have a good effect.*

IN THE COURSE *of the Revolution of February, I was present at two or three scenes which possessed the elements of grandeur; but this scene lacked them entirely, for the reason that there was nothing genuine in it. We French, especially in Paris, are prone to introduce our literary or theatrical reminiscences into our most serious demonstrations; this often gives rise to the belief that the sentiments we express are not genuine, whereas they are only clumsily adorned. In this case the imitation was so evident that the terrible originality of the facts remained concealed beneath it. It was a time when every imagination was besmeared with the crude colours with which Lamartine had been daubing his* Girondins. *The men of the first Revolution were living in every mind, their deeds and words present to every memory. All that I saw that day bore the visible impress of those recollections; it seemed to me throughout as though they were engaged in acting the French Revolution, rather than continuing it. . . .*

Men were fruitlessly endeavouring to warm themselves at the fire of our fathers' passions, imitating their gestures and attitudes as they had seen them represented on the stage, but unable to imitate their enthusiasm or to be inflamed with their fury. It was the tradition of violent deeds that was being imitated by cold hearts, which understood not the spirit of it. Although I clearly saw that the catastrophe of the piece would be a terrible one, I was never able to take the actors very seriously, and the whole seemed to me like a bad tragedy performed by provincial actors.

IN A REBELLION, *as in a novel, the most difficult part to invent is the end.*

MANY IMPORTANT HISTORICAL FACTS *can only be explained by accidental circumstances; and many others remain totally inexplicable, although I firmly believe that chance does nothing that has not been prepared beforehand. Antecedent facts, the nature of institutions, the cast of minds and the state of morals are the materials of which are composed those impromptus which astonish and alarm us.*

The mobility of all this, institutions, ideas, men and customs, in a fluctuating state of society which had, in less than sixty years, undergone the shock of seven great revolutions, without numbering a multitude of smaller, secondary upheavals—these were the general causes without which the Revolution of February would have been impossible. The principal accidents which led to it were the passions of the dynastic Opposition, which brought about a riot in proposing a reform; the suppression of this riot, first over-violent and then abandoned.

THE CONSTITUTIONAL MONARCHY *had succeeded the Ancien Régime; the Republic, the Monarchy; the Empire, the Republic; the Restoration, the Empire; and then came the Monarchy of July. After each of these successive changes it was said that the French Revolution, having accomplished what was presumptuously called its work, was finished. This had been said and it had been believed. Alas! I myself had hoped it under the Restoration, and again after the fall of the Government of the Restoration. And here is the French Revolution beginning over again, for it is still the same one. As we go on, its end seems farther off and shrouded in greater darkness. Shall we ever—as we are assured by other prophets, perhaps as delusive as their predecessors—shall we ever attain a more complete and more far-reaching social transformation than our fathers foresaw and desired, and than we ourselves are able to foresee? Or are we not destined simply to end in a condition of intermittent anarchy, the well-known chronic and incurable complaint of old peoples? As for me, I am unable to say. I do not know when this long voyage will be ended. I am weary of seeing the shore in each successive mirage, and I often ask myself whether the* terra firma *we are seeking does not really exist, and whether we are not doomed to rove the seas for ever!*

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. . . "*Plus ça change . . .*"

To carry the esprit *of the salons into literature and the* esprit *of literature into politics consists in seeking for what is novel and indigenous rather than for what is true; in preferring the showy to the useful, in showing one's self very sensible to the playing and elocution of the actors, without regard to the results of the play; and lastly, in judging by impressions rather than reasons. I need not say that this eccentricity exists among others besides Academicians. To tell the truth, the whole nation is a little inclined that way, and the French public very often takes a man-of-letters' view of politics.*

The history of our own times, *however new and unexpected it may seem, always belongs at bottom to the old history of humanity, and what we call new facts are often nothing more than facts forgotten.*

We have spent so many years *in insurrections that there has arisen among us a kind of morality peculiar to times of disorder, and a special code for days of rebellion.*

A thousand strange systems *came issuing pell-mell from the minds of innovators, and spread among the troubled minds of the crowd. Everything still remained standing except Royalty and Parliament; yet it seemed as though the shock of the Revolution had reduced society itself to dust, and as though a competition had been opened for the new form that was to be given to the edifice about to be erected in its place. Everyone came forward with a plan of his own: this one printed it in the papers, that other on the placards with which the walls were soon covered, a third proclaimed his loud-mouthed in the open air. One aimed at destroying inequality of fortune, another inequality of education, a third undertook to do away with the oldest of all inequalities, that between man and woman. Specifics were offered against poverty, and remedies for the disease of work which has tortured humanity since the first days of its existence.*

These theories were of very varied natures, often opposed and sometimes hostile to one another; but all of them, aiming lower than the government and striving to reach society itself, on which government rests, adopted the common name of Socialism.

As the French, *in their political passions, are as argumentative as they are insensible to argument, these popular meeting-places were incessantly occupied in manufacturing theories that formed the ground-work of subsequent acts of violence.*

I have sometimes observed *that men who do not know how to speak produce a greater impression, under certain circumstances, than the finest orators. They bring forward but a single idea, that of the moment, clothed in a single phrase, and somehow they lay it down on the rostrum like an inscription written in big letters, which everybody perceives, and in which each instantly recognises his own particular thought.*

As I went along *the Quai de la Ferraille, I met some National Guards from my neighbourhood, carrying on litters several of their comrades and two of their officers wounded. I observed, in talking with them, with what terrible rapidity, even in so civilised a century as our own, the most peaceful minds enter, as it were, into the spirit of civil war, and how quick they are, in these unhappy times, to acquire a taste for violence and a contempt for human life. The men with whom I was talking were peaceful, sober artisans, whose gentle and somewhat sluggish natures were still further removed from cruelty than from heroism. Yet they dreamt of nothing but massacre and destruction.*

When people assert that *nothing is safe from revolutions, I tell them they are wrong, and that centralisation is one of those things. In France there is only one thing we can't set up: that is, a free government; and only one institution we can't destroy: that is, centralisation. How could it ever perish? The enemies of government love it, and those who govern cherish it. The latter perceive, it is true, from time to time, that it exposes them to sudden and irremediable disasters; but this does not disgust them with it. The pleasure it procures them of interfering with every one and holding everything in their hands atones to them for its dangers.*

I had long been *of the opinion that, instead of aiming to make our governments eternal, we should tend to make it possible to change them in an easy and regular manner. Taken all round, I thought this less dangerous than the opposite course; and I thought it best to treat the French people like those madmen whom one should be careful not to bind lest they become infuriated by the restraint.*

The world is a strange theatre. *There are moments in it when the worst plays are those which succeed best.*

Alexis de Tocqueville
Souvenirs, 1848–1851

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many, Britain, and the United States. No to the calumnies of journalists, of an abruptly undisciplined press and radio. No to this whole gigantic "happening," incomprehensible and absurd.

Maigret seldom used bad language, but sometimes only strong words would express what he felt. This was no happening, he told himself. This great explosion of frustration was nothing but a mess in the bed.

"WELL DONE, chief. . . ."

Handshakes, smiles, congratulations. Maigret shrugged, picked up the telephone.

"Janvier? About the demonstration. . . . Yes, ours. . . . Good. Fine. It's begun?"

Outside, on the Champs-Elysées, Maigret's own "happening" was under way. A huge crowd filled the avenue, waving the tricolour, cheering, hooting car horns, singing the Marseillaise. There were men in collars and ties, smartly-dressed women, a few Ministers, some of Maigret's own men.

"*Eh bien, non!*" It was the response of all the Maigrets and Mme Maigrets, all the solid, respectable people who got up early, rode to work regularly, made a career for themselves, took a little plum brandy after dinner, went to the cinema on Friday evening, looked forward to retiring in the country, and were sorry to see Paris without the old trams and buses. They made up nearly half of France.

THE POLLING BOOTH had been fitted up in the hallway of the primary school. Notices in coloured crayon were pinned on the rickety doors, painted to look like walnut-wood. The window-panes, with frosted-glass leaf-patterns, were dusty and cracked. The queue shuffled forward across the brown-and-red tiled floor. Weary-looking clerks sat behind a trestle table piled with official forms.

"I'm not allowed to ask whom you're voting for," said Maigret.

Mme Maigret smiled. She seldom questioned him about his work. Sometimes, he would tell her. Sometimes, he even forgot to let her know when he was coming home late. But there were no real secrets between them, and each knew how the other felt. It had been the same in the first ballot, the week before.

"Me, I'm voting against the barricades," said Mme Maigret.

"I didn't know they were candidates," Maigret felt like saying. Instead, he merely nodded. That was about it.

THAT NIGHT, Mme Maigret produced one of her "special" suppers—*crème vichyssoise, coq au vin, soufflé Grand Marnier*, with one of Maigret's favourite wines. Afterwards, she served coffee in the tiny porcelain cups that Maigret disliked but had to put up with on grand occasions. The handles were so small that he always burned his fingers.

"Why don't you try one of Désiré's cigars?"

The cousin from Nevers had presented Maigret with a box that was still unopened. Inside, each cigar was enclosed in a metal cylinder. They looked like huge cartridge-cases in a magazine. Maigret shut the box. Taking out his pipe, he turned on the wireless to listen to the election results. It was a large, domed mahogany set shaped like the Pantheon, with discoloured vulcanite knobs.

They sat peacefully listening, Maigret smoking, Mme Maigret knitting in the fading light.

"It's a landslide, a veritable landslide. . . . The latest percentage forecast. . . . Another constituency in the Pas de Calais. . . . U.D.R., re-elected. . . . And now over to. . . ."

It began to grow dark in the apartment, the windows turning from deep blue to silver as the street-lights came on. Against the pale rectangle, Maigret with his pipe slowly puffing looked like a cut-out silhouette. As the results, the unbelievable, the undreamed-of results accumulated, figures and percentages began to swirl like smoke in his head.

Something was bothering him, some phrase he had heard, some reflection, perhaps some expression, something he ought to remember. What was it? Never mind, it would come back. Was it to do with Torrence? He saw the plump figure, the heavy face, the bushy eyebrows.

"I did what I could. . . ."

Was that the phrase? He remembered how Torrence had spoken, almost ironically, tolerantly. As if to say, "It's your affair, I wash my hands of it. . . ."

"I thought you'd better come back early."

That was it. *I thought you'd better*. . . . As if he, Maigret, were at Torrence's beck and call. For years, they'd been expecting his retirement. No doubt they had their little plans.

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Eh bien, non!

Janvier was due for promotion. It would do Torrence good to cool his heels for a while.

THE RADIO WAS silent now. Mme Maigret had stopped knitting and fallen asleep. One by one, the street lights were going out as the dawn sky grew paler. A few small clouds clustered round the ghost of the moon.

Maigret smoked on. There was still something tugging at his mind, like a boat at its moorings, pulled this way and that by the current.

At this point in a case, it was the time for confrontations and confessions, for the final scene in the office, for the moment when a tired, red-eyed man would at last put his head in his hands and stammer:

"All right, you win. I. . . ."

At such moments, Maigret was always filled with a kind of shame. Not triumph, not even pity, but shame at a human being finally caught in a trap. To hide his feelings, he would sometimes be brisk or stern, trying to remember the victim and not the figure before him, now a victim in his turn.

"He's all yours, Janvier. I'm off to bed."

But this time there was no confrontation, no confession. True, there had been some victims, almost by accident, shot, drowned, beaten, injured, expelled. France had suffered, so had Paris, so had the Sorbonne. A few buildings had been damaged, trees felled, paving-stones uprooted, cars burned. But had it been revolution?

Somewhere, Maigret had read that in a real revolution the first targets were . . . yes, "the centres of communication," that was it. Airports, railway terminals, telephone exchanges, radio stations, town halls. Nothing like that had been attacked this time. Where had he read it? Some book on the technique of the *coup d'état* . . . by a Communist, surely. Could it have been Lenin? And hadn't Lenin written, somewhere, "God Himself has ordained that the young should be stupid"?

Perhaps, then, it had not been a revolution. Was it a case without a crime? And if there were no crime, was there no criminal? Was no one responsible, after all?

It was quite light now in the apartment. Mme Maigret stirred in her sleep as the first traffic began to rumble along the boulevard. It would soon be time to go to work. Maigret heaved himself out of his chair, yawned, and rubbed his eyes.

Yes, someone must be responsible. There had to be someone at the origin of every case, call him what you will. But who? Maigret stepped forward to scrape out his pipe into the ashtray on the mantelpiece. In the mirror, he caught sight of his reflection, looking into his own eyes. Was this, after all, the confrontation? He frowned, blinked, and looked away.

"Don't go out without your coffee."

Mme Maigret had woken up.

"Forget it." Maigret's tone was sharper than he intended. "I'm sorry. I was . . . reflecting. It's time I left. Life goes on, you know. I'll telephone later."

Out in the street, it was chilly again, as if summer were already over, as if it were already time for the students to come back.

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Column

WHAT HAPPENED to Lucky Jim after he left Wales is a matter of history. His father-in-law took him into his firm and after a time Jim discovered that his special brand of brashness and philistinism was well adapted to its advertising and sales promotion side. The more outrageous his jingles, the more he pulled faces at the public, the more the customers liked it. *Who the hell wants Mozart?* was one of the most successful slogans ever invented.

When his marriage broke up, Jim established his own very successful agency. He had found that he had much in common with the tough and iconoclastic spirit of the modern business tycoon, and he and his clients had an instinctive understanding of each other's needs. This natural affinity was strengthened when Jim extended his business activities to the United States, where he immediately responded to the frontier spirit which once, in earlier days, had so endeared South Wales to him.

But as Jim grew older and more affluent, he began to worry, and all the more because worry and wealth made him put on weight; he began to develop a worry waistline. For he had come to realise that there were dark forces which threatened the life, liberty and pursuit of happiness of all those for whom, like him, luck and talent had earned the privileges of complete irresponsibility. Those beer-sodden colliers, those randy dentists' wives, who had endowed the Welsh valleys with such charm and magic in his academic springtime were all in reality the advance guard of a great conspiracy which menaced everything he loved.

The end was tragic but glorious. The exploits of the James Bond Brigade which Jim raised, commanded and led to Viet Nam, and of his two seconds-in-command, Major Braine and Major Levin, the Jackson and Jeb Stuart of the campaign, have added an imperishable page to the fading annals of British military glory. Some detractors have argued that in fact the Brigade never really knew whether it was coming or going, but such criticism seems petty when compared with the heroism of Jim's last advance/retreat through the Mekong Delta.

When a random fire cracker blew Jim's brains out across the bar in Saigon, his life had surpassed even the wildest of his youthful imaginings. The funeral oration delivered at his graveside by his Chief of Staff, Colonel Conquest, has been aptly compared, both for its eloquence and its interminable length, with that of the Rev. Edward Everett at the battlefield of Gettysburg; but perhaps the final, soldierly word was that of Jim's old comrade-in-arms, General Westmoreland: *lucky in his life—damned lucky in his death.*

I AM SURE THAT no one will confuse Lucky Jim's later career with that of his creator, Mr. Kingsley Amis; even though by now Mr. Amis' personality has become so thoroughly entangled with that of others, real and imaginary, with Lucky Jim himself, with the late Ian Fleming, with James Bond, that it is sometimes difficult to remember who he really is. Certainly he himself is far more likable than any of his impersonations; but if in fact confusion sometimes does take place, it is to some extent Mr. Amis' own fault. So at least I conclude from the title, *Lucky Jim's Politics*, of a talk delivered to the Conservative Political Centre at its summer school in 1967 and now published as a pamphlet, among such other pieces of Conservative propaganda as *Growth Realities* by Russell Lewis, and *Europe and Technology*, by Professor Brian Chapman.

Mr. Amis' talk was a recapitulation of what he facetiously refers to as "a world-renowned article of mine" published in the *Sunday Telegraph* under the title of *Why Lucky Jim Turned Right: Confessions of an Ex-Radical*, and the question he addresses himself to is why a youthful radical should have developed into a middle-aged conservative. A dispassionate reader may wonder why Mr. Amis should feel that such a change requires any particular explanation. After all, Mr. Amis has done no more than tread the well-beaten path which many others have followed on the way from youth to age; alternatively, he has simply suffered the same sea change as millions of voters after four years of Labour rule.

Nevertheless, he does (and presumably the Conservative Party does) feel that his own case is significant. Yet most of the reasons he gives for his change of heart (for one cannot keep thinking that it is a change of heart rather than of mind) seem hardly sufficient to explain it. One of the most important was the Russian war of intervention in Hungary in 1956, and another the Chinese annexation of Tibet in 1959, both of them monstrous acts which quite rightly shocked Mr. Amis. Another, equally important to Mr. Amis, was Labour Party policy towards education, and in particular the universities, of which his own view has been

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stated succinctly in the phrase (first published in this journal): *More means Worse.*

Now these no doubt are matters which should seriously concern anyone who is interested in politics. What worries me is that I cannot see why any of them should provide reasons for a political conversion of the kind Mr. Amis has experienced. I think I should probably agree with Mr. Amis on the subject both of Hungary (or Tibet) and of university education. But I cannot see that what has happened in either case should turn me into a conservative if I were a socialist, any more than it should turn me into a socialist if I were a conservative. The Labour Party gave no support to Communist intervention either in Hungary or in Tibet. I should have said that it was quite conspicuously shocked by them, even if (like the Conservative government) it could do nothing to prevent them. Nor was it a Labour government which carried out the great expansion of university education which arouses Mr. Amis' indignation. It was, as Sir Edward Boyle has recently reminded us, a Conservative government, and in doing so they were carrying out the recommendation of Lord Robbins, in whom even Mr. Amis would find it hard to detect a Socialist. Sir Edward may by now have doubts about the wisdom of that policy, but he is too fair a man to try and discharge the responsibility for it upon the Labour Party.

The truth is, surely, that with regard either to Communist intervention, or to higher education there has been no significant difference between the two main political parties. Why then should Mr. Amis feel compelled, on these grounds, to shift his allegiance from one to the other? The reason is, I think, that what has influenced Mr. Amis is not so much the policies, achievements, or failures of the Labour Party as a sense of growing, and by now almost ungovernable irritation with one particular section of it which he identifies with "the so-called progressive, or as I rudely call him, the Lefty."

The Lefty is Mr. Amis' *bête noire*. Young, he is "the most ignorant and unimaginative activist that can be imagined." He marches to Aldermaston or demonstrates against the war in Viet Nam; denounces the sins of capitalism while condoning those of communism; prefers foreign countries to his own; is indifferent to established English institutions like democracy, parliamentary government, the rule of law; has never learned to recognise the true face of communism which is always and everywhere the same (even in Czechoslovakia?). This monster dominates the B.B.C., "that enormous machine of Lefty propaganda"; he is hypocritical, vociferous, fanatical and ubiquitous; things will never be right until he is deprived of his influence and we can hear again the still small voice of reason as it speaks in the person of Mr. Heath and Mr. Enoch Powell.

How far does the Lefty exist in reality and how far is Mr. Amis' portrait of him an accurate one? The Lefty undoubtedly exists; his voice is to be heard most consistently and characteristically in the pages of the *New Statesman*, and this is probably the best measure of his power, because the *New Statesman* has never had any significant influence on British politics, and least of all on the British Labour Party, the great majority of which holds the Lefty in at least as much derision and contempt as Mr. Amis does. On the other hand, if millions of voters have, like Mr. Amis, become disillusioned with the Labour Party, it is not because the Lefty has triumphed in it; it is rather because the Labour Party has implemented so many conservative policies that the ordinary Labour Party supporter, who is not a Lefty, no longer sees any reason why he should vote for it. Mr. Amis will find that he has many companions on his trek to the right, but they will be there for very different reasons from his.

ANGRY YOUNG MEN grow old, and age cools the fever in their blood, tempers enthusiasm, brings satisfactions the young never dream of or desire. The gradual, almost imperceptible passage from youthful protest to middle-aged acquiescence is one which many writers, artists and intellectuals have trodden, and every generation has lost leaders with a ribbon in their coat and a handful of silver in their pocket.

So Mr. Amis is not alone. Another example of what happens to the Angry Young Man of yesterday may be found in two interviews which Mr. John Osborne recently gave to the *Observer*. And perhaps it is a more significant one because Mr. Osborne is a very considerable artist, probably, I think, the most gifted dramatist now alive in England, and speaks specifically as an artist and not as a politician. Unlike Mr. Amis, he is not much concerned to find any general significance in his somewhat disabused acceptance of the fact that life is for the most part a series of disappointments; only he notes almost casually that he belongs to a generation which grew up during the War, and that their anger was largely directed against the conditions and the society which made that particular war possible. But that war is over, and so are the conditions which led to it, and Mr. Osborne has the wisdom to see that there is very little room today for the particular form of anger which they provoked in him and his contem-

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poraries. Their anger came genuinely from looking back, but one cannot go on looking back for ever, at least not if one hopes to go on creating works of art, or creating anything at all; nor is anger a kind of inexhaustible fount of inspiration, which can be switched from one object to another with the passage of time. In this, Mr. Osborne differs from Mr. Amis. Young Mr. Amis, a socialist, was angry with the conservatives. Middle-aged Mr. Amis, a conservative, finds it equally natural to be angry with the socialists. Whether this shows anything more than Mr. Amis' capacity for irritation is a matter for doubt.

Mr. Osborne who was also once angry is angry no more; indeed his refusal to be angry introduced a certain amount of high comedy into the *Observer* interviews. For the interviewer was Kenneth Tynan, who perhaps corresponds more closely to a Lefty as defined by Mr. Amis than anyone else one could imagine and whose anger threshold is very low indeed. Hardly a day passes without provoking Mr. Tynan's indignation. The war in Viet Nam; censorship; the Lord Chamberlain; the United States . . . one can hardly understand how such things can go on existing for a moment in the face of Mr. Tynan's disapproval. Equally strong are Mr. Tynan's enthusiasms. Student-power; flower-power; black-power; psychedelic happenings; cruelty on the stage; four-letter words; drugs; all give him a sense of innocent enjoyment such as others might derive from a day at the seaside. But Mr. Osborne obstinately refused to respond to either Mr. Tynan's loves or his hates. No, he did not like happenings, stroboscopic light shows, experiments with mixed media. No, recent events at the Sorbonne filled him absolutely with no enthusiasm at all. Nor did flower people. Nor *LSD*. Yes, he was a conservative rather than an anarchist. And he was a patriot. And he hoped always to live in England. Mr. Osborne refused all Mr. Tynan's gambits and rather sadly and ruefully, yet with considerable dignity, confessed that what concerned him most was to cultivate his own garden in the hope that somewhere, somehow, something might spring up which was genuinely his own.

Lucky Jim; Mr. Amis; Mr. Osborne; each has taken his own way out of angry young manhood. Of the three I most admire Mr. Osborne's; yet in one respect at least all of them have one, perhaps slightly surprising thing in common. For it was love of England, as much as hatred of communism, which drove Jim to Viet Nam; and there is something of the same thing to be found in both Mr. Amis' and Mr. Osborne's recent confessions of faith. Mr. Amis, of course, always has liked it here, and it was one of the things one most liked about him, only one wished it wasn't combined with an equal dislike of *anything there*, which was anywhere across the Channel. But Mr. Osborne, if I remember, once wrote a letter declaring his abomination of everything characteristic of our Bird's Custard Island. Now even the taxman can't keep him away.

★

While Mr. Osborne proclaims himself a patriot, even if only "a patriot for me," and Mr. Amis falls back on the old English sheepdog virtues, in different parts of the British Isles other people are beginning to discover that they have virtues of their own, which are by no means English. For some years now the English have lived with their Celtic neighbours in this island in the comfortable assurance that nothing could ever disturb their effortless superiority, their prescriptive right to government, which to lesser tribes has often looked like arrogance. It now seems likely that a fundamental change is taking place in the relationship between the English and their neighbours of the Celtic fringe. When *Plaid Cymru*, the Welsh National Party, only just fails to win a constituency like Caerphilly, which for many years has been a pocket borough of the South Wales Miners Federation, and when the tide of nationalism is running even more strongly in Scotland, it means that every Englishman will have to look upon his neighbours with a new eye, and in doing so no doubt will also discover something new about himself.

No one can quite say as yet whether Caerphilly and Carmarthen and Mrs. Ewing M.P. represent a genuine and permanent growth of nationalist sentiment, or how far they merely reflect a disillusion with the traditional political parties which is by no means confined to Wales or Scotland. There are some (and one suspects that they include most English politicians) who are inclined to interpret the nationalist triumphs as Celtic Orpingtons, protest votes which will soon lose their strength and in any case can easily be appeased by a few judicious concessions. But this, I think, is to overlook a fundamental difference. The Celtic vote, ever since the Celts had one, always has been a protest vote, given first to radicalism and then to socialism, and if now it has found other means by which to make itself felt, I doubt very much whether the decision will be easily reversed.

If this is so, then the political consequences will be of a kind which no politician as yet seems to have taken as seriously as they deserve.

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Of the 107 Scottish and Welsh constituencies, some eighty have in recent years gone to Labour. They have indeed constituted one of its strongest centres of power. After Caerphilly, none of these seats can any longer be regarded as safe, and if an election were to be held at this moment, it is likely that the Labour party would be reduced to an insignificant rump and the Welsh and Scottish nationalists together would form the second largest parliamentary group. Under such circumstances, it seems doubtful whether party government as we have known it could continue to function; while if, as the pendulum swung, the Labour Party recovered something of its former strength, it would become increasingly probable that the nationalists would hold the balance of power between the two parties and Parliament would be reduced to the same scene of confusion, obstruction and delay as in the days of the Irish Party under Parnell.

THESE ARE NO LONGER wild speculations but solidly based possibilities, and they ought to make the ordinary politician tremble, for they would put an end to what is sometimes contemptuously referred to as "the Parliamentary game," but is in fact the real basis of the British constitution. And what tempts one, sadly, to think that this may really be what the future holds is that it would form so logical an end to the extraordinary history of the English people. England's first step towards becoming an imperial power was the subjugation of the people of these islands. What could be more natural a conclusion to the decay of its once great empire than that, after successive withdrawals, from Ireland, from India, from Africa, from the Far East and the Middle East, she should now, willingly or unwillingly, let even the Welsh and the Scots go free?

Should one welcome or deplore such a possibility? A few years ago I should have had no hesitation about how to answer such a question but today I must confess to growing doubts; though I must confess also that to see my own country governed by what would in effect be a slightly enlarged version of the Glamorgan County Council would give me no sort of satisfaction. But perhaps I am frightening myself unduly. History does not work quite so neatly and logically as I have been suggesting here; all the same, I have a suspicion that in this case it may.

R

The Corner

When children's voices come from a great distance
Such that we can only hear their screams and laughter,
We might imagine youth
To be full of clowns and stabbings.

Our adult voices come from so little distance
We have no time to wonder at superficial meanings,
We are so certain our words
Are full of our kind of truth.

The invisible child who ran on the new seeded lawn
In autumn has left his footprints in the spring grass
And is gone round the year's corner,
Running to no end.

Musing thus on a deeper implication,
I seemed to hear you say, "Open the door."
And from the window saw you
Turning the corner of the road.

Alexander Baird

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THEATRE

Grousers, Male & Female

By John Weightman

MR. OSBORNE informed me last year that I should stay away from the theatre. He has, moreover, said such violent things about critics that when one sneaks in to see a play by him nowadays, one hardly dares confess to oneself what one thinks about it, still less air one's views in the public prints. Supposing one does not worship every word! What if one has Reservations or has Not Understood? One should, I imagine, just crawl under a stone and die. But how can one, if there is still a flicker of life in the old carcase? The theatre exists for people to go to. Once inside, they have certain experiences. It stands to reason that they might feel an urge to define those experiences in words, and if some editor is prepared to publish the words, should one deny oneself the pleasure of communication? Without being an Osborne hero, one may have an itch to talk. So, damn it all, here goes.

Time Present and *The Hotel in Amsterdam* constitute what some French research student will eventually call *un diptyque osbornien*. They are parallel treatments, in the feminine and the masculine, of the fundamental Osborne character—the paranoiac complainer, the bear with a sore head, the self-dramatising misfit, the irritable soul who refuses to find life tolerable. John Osborne became famous because, in *Look Back In Anger*, the grumbles of this character corresponded, as it turned out, to the inarticulate resentment of a whole generation. Even in those distant days I was too old fully to sympathise, because post-Second War England seemed to me to be so much better than the England of my childhood that I couldn't quite understand what such bitter resentment was about. However, I eventually grasped the point that each new generation has to be contemptuous and dissatisfied in its own way, and that Mr. Osborne was, in some measure, the voice of youth. Since then, the years have passed; Mr. Osborne's characters have gone on grumbling; they have risen in the social scale; no more talk about sweet-stalls, or ironing, or "the posh Sunday papers"; the discussion now refers to the acceptable brands of champagne, the virtues of expensive clothes as against cheap, the quality of Cutty Sark as opposed to Haig, the servant problem, the dreariness of the working-class, the psychological effect of having one's birthday mentioned (or not mentioned) in the *Times*, the awfulness of modern youth, and so on. In so far as Mr. Osborne's central characters represent his own views—and they appear to do so to quite a large extent, if one compares the tone of the plays with that of the recent interviews published in the *Observer*—they now represent the voice of dissatisfied, self-hating, self-pitying middle-age.

I AM NOT SUGGESTING that this is necessarily a bad thing or that Mr. Osborne has changed sides as he has grown older. Playwrights are not required to be well-balanced, fair-minded people capable of acting in their spare time as justices of the peace. It is Mr. Osborne's strength that he has the courage of his grumbles. He is not the sort of author who writes to be successful and then is reconciled to society once he has got on. He is a genuine neurotic who will never be appeased by external applause and will always insult his audience rather than pander to it. If he happens to look rather like a young Colonel Blimp on the Royal Court posters and to sound rather like an old Colonel Blimp at times in the press, this is because, for the moment, he has honestly espoused Blimpish values. In any case, he never had a Left-Wing attitude, not even in *Look Back In Anger*, where the strongest positive emotion, as I remember, was a vague nostalgia for some lost gentlemanly society. The political content of the play, such as it was, like the reference to Suez in *The Entertainer*, arose from a desire to be *against*. Had the Colonel, who is presented so sympathetically at the end of *Look Back In Anger*, been brought into *The Entertainer*, one would not have been surprised to see him take the Right-Wing line about Suez. Mr. Osborne has never had any obvious political principles, nor indeed any organised general philosophy. He thinks and feels in lumps, like most artists, and the problem is: what pattern is he putting the lumps into and does it produce a satisfactory aesthetic effect on the spectator's mind, independently of such ideas as happen to be present?

IN THESE TWO PLAYS one can discern a common structure. In each case there is a central loquacious character—a resting actress in *Time Present*, a film-writer in *The Hotel in Amsterdam*—who grouses about life in general to a little court of admirers. Both characters have a Best Friend, who defers to them, says how splendid they are, fields for them, puts up with them and is a shade homosexual in his or her emotional attachment. In the case of the actress, Pamela, this is the Labour M.P., whose flat she is temporarily sharing; in that of the film-writer, Laurie, a film-editor working for the same tycoon. The grouser plus best friend was, of course, part of the original pattern in *Look Back In Anger*. A feature found in both

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new plays is that the central character not only subjugates the Best Friend, but also wins the love of the Best Friend's official partner. Pamela has an affair with the Labour M.P.'s lover, and accidentally becomes pregnant. When Laurie confesses to his Best Friend's wife that he loves her, she proclaims her love in return. This device is clearly intended to add lustre to Pamela and Laurie; in spite of being difficult, edgy characters, they have that irresistible something which attracts other people, like moths to a flame. Where they are, other people become subordinate. Even so, curiously enough, the action in both plays is dominated by an absent character, operating mainly through Pamela and Laurie.

In *Time Present*, this is Pamela's father, a distinguished actor-manager who is dying in hospital and whose death-throes supposedly create the crisis behind the play. In *The Hotel in Amsterdam*, it is the tycoon, K.L., a tyrannical, scheming blood-sucker from whom the group of friends have escaped to spend a week-end in secret in Amsterdam. Incidentally, although I know nothing of the film-world, I find this tycoon-figure difficult to believe in, especially in the English context. Are English film people such wee, cowering, tim'rous beasties that they have to run off to Holland to escape psychological invasion by their boss? I suspect that this is again a dramatic device. Although Mr. Osborne's central characters are monuments of egotism and without any metaphysical interest that would serve as God or an Ideal, they need the relief of anchoring themselves to some loved or hated object. For Pamela, her father is a sort of God; he had style, artistry, greatness, and when he dies the light goes out of her life. She rejects the lover and goes off bravely to have an abortion and face the future on her own. K.L., on the other hand, is a Devil, whom Laurie and his cronies discuss at length with horrified fascination. At the end, the news comes through that K.L. has committed suicide; the tyrant was, presumably, a great big sentimental boob who really wanted to be loved and couldn't last out the week-end when he found that his slaves had given him the slip. The friends are left contemplating blankness; they have lost their Devil who gave a sort of negative interest to life.

Both plays, I think, are meant to be rather more than dramas; they are tragedies that go off at half-cock. They cannot be true tragedies because the fate of the protagonists is not shown in any general light, in relation to life as a whole. Pamela and Laurie grumble endlessly about existence but do not see far enough beyond themselves to have what would amount to a destiny. Both centre their interest on the absent human being who has to act as an absolute: the actor-manager who represents style, which is bound up with the right brand of champagne and a careless disdain for ordinary, humdrum living; the tycoon, K.L., who represents an extreme of hatred, the end of the grumbler's spectrum. Mr. Osborne takes care to surround Pamela and Laurie with admiration and is obviously implying that, although failures in one sense, they are superior beings in another. Neither, in fact, can bear the intellectual or human strain of this honour, because their only stock-in-trade is their formless dissatisfaction. Pamela is not much more than a rather pretentious person with a father-fixation, while Laurie, if he were as remarkable a man as Mr. Osborne keeps suggesting, would find something more general to attach his life to than his hatred for K.L. In my view, neither character is superior; they are both life-like bores, but whereas Pamela is on the whole a boring bore, Laurie is an interesting one.

This is to say that, in spite of the similarities of structure, the two halves of Mr. Osborne's diptych are very different in aesthetic quality. Not only has *Time Present* some obvious technical defects, such as a long and dreary exposition and a character who is brought in at the end to say hail and farewell, unhappily, in one breath; no one in the play, apart from Pamela, rings true, and the trouble with Pamela, in spite of the enormous skill and presence that Miss Jill Bennett brings to bear on the part, is that her truth is shoddy. Why should we be interested in her flatly stated opinions about spotty youths or the futility of politics? She is the sort of random, not very penetrating person we would find tedious in real life, and Mr. Osborne gives her tediousness no extra dimension on the stage. I have never heard the seats at the Royal Court creak so loudly as they did during *Time Present*, while the audience shifted uneasily under the dull spate of words.

The Hotel in Amsterdam, on the contrary, is excellently constructed. The six characters, shut in the hotel room and filling the vacancy with deliberate chat, create a nice little *Huis Clos*, which is variegated in the usual way by the arrival of waiters and an unexpected and excruciating visit. The quality of a certain type of group friendship, with its pecking order and its currents of unease and sexual ambiguity, is quite delicately rendered. And above all, the central loud-mouth sees himself up to a point as a figure of fun. He builds up his complaints with fanciful abandon, as if he knew that to bitch about everything on the assumption that other people are always to blame is just a way of letting off steam, because one is oneself a grumbling, uncertain, whisky-dependent little boy of dubious sexuality, who finds the world too awful to grow up in. The part, with its pathos and great streaks of vulgarity, is so written that Paul Scofield can take it with both hands and, in spite of some *longueurs*, turn it into a memorable experience.

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Clio on the Couch

Prolegomena to Psycho-history — By BRUCE MAZLISH

SOME BOOKS, by their very success, illuminate the end of a road. Such a book is Victor Wolfenstein's *The Revolutionary Personality*.[1] It is the best exemplification of Harold Lasswell's famous dictum—political men displace their private motives on to public objects—enunciated over thirty years ago in *Psychopathology and Politics*, that we are likely to have for a long time. Its analyses of Lenin, Trotsky, and Gandhi are very Freudian, and very good—much, much better than the Freud-Bullitt analysis of Wilson that has occasioned so much recent comment. Yet, its successes (unlike the Freud-Bullitt fiasco) cast into bold and useful relief the failures and limitations of the orthodox Freudian-Lasswellian approach, an approach that has hitherto dominated so much of the work in the area of history, political science, and psycho-analysis. Rather, however, than reading this as a pointer to despair, I would emphasise the book's positive value in directing our attention to other possibilities in the emerging field of psycho-historical inquiry.

Let me consider Wolfenstein's book first, on its own merits. His primary aim is "to generate a set of useful psycho-political propositions about revolutionary involvement and leadership." This takes the form of an effort to work out the model of a "revolutionary personality." The basic psychological inspiration is Freud (mediated through Wolfenstein's distinguished aunt, Dr. Martha Wolfenstein, which gives an authenticity and professional insight to the analyses missing from the work of less lucky social scientists). The application of Freud's findings to politics, he acknowledges to have been best done by Dr. Lasswell and Erik H. Erikson.

Wolfenstein's method is to develop his notion of a "revolutionary personality" from three life histories: Lenin, Trotsky, and Gandhi. Repeatedly, we are told that Wolfenstein is only erecting "hypotheses" on these case studies, which other empirical studies will confirm or disconfirm. Wolfenstein's hypotheses concerning the "revolutionary personality" are as follows. He is a man who "had an unusually ambivalent relationship with his father." Two more conditions, however, are necessary to turn him into a revolutionary: "The conflict with paternal authority must be alive and unresolvable in the family context as adolescence draws to a close" (*i.e.*, the father has just died, or the son leaves the family); and "There must exist a political context in terms of which the conflict can be expressed." This last is made more specific by Wolfenstein's shrewd observation that the precipitant factor is when "established political authority acts with unexpected aggressiveness towards the potential revolutionist" (*e.g.*, executing Lenin's brother, imprisoning Trotsky, etc.). As stated, this may sound like naive Freudianism. As worked out, I can assure the reader that it is most soberly and persuasively handled. (The problem of whether Wolfenstein is using a "fair sample" is, of course, another matter, to which I shall have to refer later.)

What of Erikson in all this? Wolfenstein does make substantial outward gestures to Erikson's theory of psycho-genetic development stages, trying to apply them to his three revolutionaries. At the end of this effort, Wolfenstein concludes that there are no common characteristics to be derived from Erikson for the model of a "revolutionary personality." We are left, then, with the shared conditions as stated earlier. And I, for one, find the spirit of Erikson's work almost entirely missing. I am not persuaded that Wolfenstein has made the Eriksonian interpretation, with its essential stress on the corres-

[1] E. Victor Wolfenstein, *The Revolutionary Personality: Lenin, Trotsky, Gandhi.* Princeton University Press, $7.50 and 69s.

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pondence of somatic, ego, and social process, central to his analysis. Wolfenstein wishes a model of a "revolutionary personality," and not Erikson's complex description and analysis of what Erikson calls "a convergence in all three processes."[2] In short, Erikson here is only frosting (though very good frosting) on the Freudian-Lasswellian cake.

WITHIN HIS OWN TERMS, however, Wolfenstein offers us generally excellent analyses. I cannot do more here than to give a few random examples from a plethora of fine insights into the materials relating to the three men. Thus, discussing the change of name from Bronstein to Trotsky, which occurred during an escape from prison, Wolfenstein points out:

> He chose Trotsky—the name of one of his jailors in Odessa. In this simple act he revealed that ambivalence which was to be so injurious to his political fortunes. Just as he had posed as a Marxist when fighting off submission to Marxism [described previously], so now he (so to speak) posed as his jailor when trying to escape from captivity. Trotsky's fatal flaw was this indecisiveness about submitting or fighting, as shown in this case by his identification with aggressive authority. He did not call himself Lenin, a name innocent of political connotations or Stalin, a name connoting steel and hardness, but Trotsky, a name which embodied the very authority against which he was to fight.

As an instance of how to articulate the Lasswellian "private-motives-to-public-agencies" mechanism, I cite admiringly Wolfenstein's analysis of Gandhi's increasing shift to a feminine identification, culminating in a vow to renounce sexual intercourse (in Gandhi's 36th year), which is then given a political dimension:

> With the vow [to embrace "*satyagraha*," usually translated as "non-violence"] a link was established between the private and the public aspects of his life. Just as a vow had marked his dedication to sexual renunciation, so the September vow [to "*satyagraha*"] sanctified his role in politics and made clear to him what the course of Indian action must be: feminine (that is, nonviolent) resistance must be used against the oppression of British masculine authority.

Wolfenstein has other strong points. He writes clearly, and with a minimum of psychological jargon; yet he does not go to the opposite extreme and under-interpret his material. He has a sure grasp of the historical and political background of his personalities, and avoids the incredible gaucheries and gaps in this aspect perpetrated by Freud-Bullitt on Woodrow Wilson. Everyone interested in or working on Lenin, Trotsky, or Gandhi (though one must note Wolfenstein's bravery in venturing into a psychological analysis of Gandhi on the eve of Erikson's own writing on that subject) will be in Wolfenstein's debt for what he does, and the way he does it. Nevertheless, with an apology to Wolfenstein, who has rightly written the book he wanted to write, I shall now pass on to some of the book's limitations and to some of the possibilities and problems which lie ahead in psycho-historical inquiry. In short, from here on, Wolfenstein's book will be treated, sometimes rather unfairly, as a stalking horse.

ANY WORK of psycho-historical inquiry, just as any work in history or political science, will be open to certain types of sniping. Is a minor error of induction from the data more serious in psycho-historical inquiry than elsewhere? Thus, we are told, presumably on the basis of his sister Anna's description, that as a boy Lenin's "whole aspect... was jovial, humorous, mischievous, self-confident, aggressive.... [He] was noisy and boisterous, a player of practical jokes, an inveterate tease, quick of repartee, sharp of tongue." Immediately

[2] At the core of Erikson's theory is his emphasis on the interaction between the individual and the group (family and society). In each of his stages of development, he centres attention on three processes: the somatic, or biologically given; the individual's ego mastery; and the social context (in *Young Man Luther*, for example, involving such elements as level of technology, communication system, problem of territorial or national identity, social structure, marginality, and so forth). Erikson sees these three processes as corresponding processes, in which each one interacts with the others. As a gross example, an infant born crippled (somatic) will have difficulty learning to walk at the appropriate age-level, and thus have a problem of "autonomy" (ego mastery), complicated or made easier by the way in which his society treats its cripples—*e.g.*, as a product of the devil, remediable physical affliction, etc. (social context). The three processes run both together and forward in all of Erikson's stages of development—for which he has such polarity names as basic trust or mistrust (Freud's oral stage); autonomy or shame (anal); initiative or guilt (genital); and so forth. (For the full scheme, see *Childhood and Society*, 1963.)

Wolfenstein's application of the above to his three figures is roughly as follows. Lenin was basically mistrustful, least shameful, and least guilty; Trotsky and Gandhi were both trustful in the earliest stage, and both are placed on the shame and guilt side of the development spectrum, with Gandhi nearer the end. During the "identity crisis" of the adolescence period, to put it in crude summary terms, Lenin was most successful in identifying with a strong father, Trotsky was ambivalent, and Gandhi tended to identify with the mother.

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after this, Wolfenstein states that "Vladimir thus appears to have been a somewhat shy boy." If no grandiose "hypotheses" are built on such flimsy induction from the evidence (and Wolfenstein doesn't build out from this one), then I do not think the temptation of anti-Freudian historians to discredit the whole approach can be taken seriously; general historians can be faulted all too readily and often on this score for them to throw the first stone.

What of the more serious problem, of making tentative but tendentious statements based on insubstantial and scratchy evidence? (Wolfenstein admits this readily in the case of Lenin: "The interpretation of Lenin's development... has been highly speculative"; an egregious instance of this is Phyllis Greenacre's analysis of Darwin and Butler, *The Quest for the Father* [1963]). For example, Wolfenstein analyses the effect of the extended absences from home, as part of his job, of Lenin's father. Such an absence we are told, in one long paragraph,

> *tends* to create feelings of insecurity and mistrust.... It *must* have had a strange effect on young Lenin's mind.... The loving, temperate attention of his mother *undoubtedly* provided a stiff leavening of stability... but the pattern of alternating great attention and prolonged absence [of the father] ... *probably* produced strongly ambivalent feelings.... These feelings were *probably* further intensified... the high moral rectitude of the father *undoubtedly* resulted in an unusually demanding superego for the son.... [my italics]

Such language arouses our strongest doubts. Nevertheless, I would be the last to deny the usefulness of "speculation" in psycho-history, and history generally; it must never be confused, however, with sound (or as sound as the historian can get) induction from the evidence. In psycho-historical inquiry, it is *probably* a good idea to abstain as much as possible from the over-emphatic extrapolatory voice.

In addition to the problems of false extrapolation and over-assertive extrapolation from the written evidence, there is the key problem of possible false interpretation of the material. Even if one accepts the purely Freudian approach, can one be sure of a particular analysis? Let me give an example at some length. Wolfenstein quotes a wonderful passage, stuffed with psychological images, from Trotsky's autobiography. In it, Trotsky gives one of the classic descriptions—reminding us of similar ones concerning Hitler—of the demagogue's relations to the mass of listeners:

> I spoke from out of a warm cavern of human bodies.... At times it seemed as if I felt, with my lips, the stern inquisitiveness of this crowd that had merged into a single whole. Then all the arguments and words thought out in advance would break and recede under the imperative pressure of sympathy, and other words, other arguments, utterly unexpected by the orator but needed by these people, would emerge in full array from my subconsciousness. On such occasions I felt as if I were listening to the speaker from the outside, trying to keep pace with his ideas, afraid that, like a somnambulist, he might fall off the edge of the roof at the sound of my conscious reasoning. Such was the Modern Circus [the hall in which Trotsky was speaking].... The infants were peacefully sucking the breasts from which approving or threatening shouts were coming. The whole crowd was like that, like infants clinging with their dry lips to the nipples of the revolution. Leaving the Modern Circus was even more difficult than entering it.... In a semi-consciousness of exhaustion, I would float on countless arms above the heads of the people, to reach the exit.... Then some gate would open, suck me in, and close after me....

Wolfenstein's interpretation, in part, is as follows: Trotsky, he says, "describes his actions in peculiarly passive tones"; the effect of the crowd on Trotsky is to break down "the tight controls of consciousness, the inhibiting forces of guilt"; "the crowd in terms of personal contact is analogous to the inevitable forces of history in terms of ideology and abstraction, in each case a benevolent force carrying him safely forward"; and "Trotsky feels himself to be the mother of the revolution, nursing it as the mothers in his audience are nursing their children. He unconsciously views himself as a better mother to his revolutionary children than his mother was to him."

Now, some of this is suggestive, especially the comments on the effect of crowds. On the question of Trotsky's being the "mother of the revolution, nursing it," I find myself offering an alternative interpretation. Surely, it is Trotsky whose oral needs are being satisfied, and who is being nurtured and sustained by the crowd and the revolution. "I felt, with *my* lips, the... crowd," he tells us first. Then he identifies with the crowd—"I felt as if I were listening to the speaker from *the outside*"—and only then talks of the crowd as being "like infants clinging with their dry lips to the nipples of the revolution." The crowd's "new-found unity" can be interpreted as Trotsky's unity with the nurturing mother, and a gate opening to "suck me in" translated as the child's well-known desire for incorporation with the mother through the nipple. To back this up, we have the knowledge that Trotsky suffered from "chronic catarrh" of the stomach, indicative of early feeding problems, and Trotsky's own admission, in reference

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to his reading habits, that he was always afraid he would not get enough. "I swallowed books, fearful that my entire life would not be long enough. . . . My reading was nervous, impatient and unsystematic."

THE READER need not choose between Wolfenstein and me. I pose this instance simply to make vivid the general problem. The solution to the problem, of course, is that the interpretation of any one passage must be based on a host of other, similar passages, and on the resultant picture of the personality and its dynamics that the "analyst" erects on this basis. The difference between the clinician and the psycho-historian is that the former can recheck his "diagnosis" with the living patient, while the latter must do it against further published data. (Later, I shall try to show that there are gains and losses on both sides.) Both ought to place their interpretation of the individual against a wider social context: *e.g.*, what are the characteristics of Russian feeding habits, of Russian toilet-training, and so forth (Wolfenstein does not even mention, if only to dismiss, the existing literature on these subjects). For the clinician this is generally intuitive; for the psycho-historian it must be by a sort of psychological and anthropological "distancing" from his own preconceptions, which he obtains by studying the works on these subjects by fellow scholars.

The problem of rival psycho-analytic interpretations, however, is a key problem because it treads heavily on the historian's wariness as to his preparation in psycho-analytic theory. How is *he* to know about "oral" needs? about guilt? about passivity? Must he himself be analysed, or become a candidate at a Psycho-analytic Training Institute (if he could spare the time, and the money, *and* be admitted)? There is, as yet, no simple answer to all of these questions. One thing, I think, can be said with certainty. Merely going through a personal analysis does not turn one into a psycho-historian. One can cite the renowned historian, Lewis Namier, as an instance; for he is often cited as one who went through analysis, tried to apply it to history (see, for example, his *Charles Townshend* [1959]), and admitted a large measure of failure. While psycho-historical inquiry can undoubtedly be widened by personal experience of psycho-analysis—as Freud said, "There is knowing, and knowing [*i.e.*, rationally, and emotionally]"—it is, in fact, an intellectual discipline that must be created out of very different materials from the merely personal.

Without entering further into this question here, we can return to the original point concerning rival interpretations, and conclude that, in any case, the historian (or political scientist) is faced with a similar problem in all his work. His main task, in fact, is to decide whether the interpretation of a particular document, or event, is in accord with the rest of his "evidence" and with the general picture that he has constructed from the evidence. In short, the terms of psycho-history may be new, but the charge to the historian is the same: he must pass judgment on the totality of the evidence.[3]

THE DANGER of the *sort* of Freudian analysis just above of the Trotsky passage—both Wolfenstein's and mine—is that it may lead one into psychological reductionism. It can become a closed game, as in the Freud-Bullitt *Wilson*, where Wilson is reduced to his oral, anal, and genital aspects, divorced from the social context, and made into a purely pathological clinical specimen. Wolfenstein, for example, is well aware of this danger:

> My interest has been quite exclusively in the motivations of the subjects and certain emotional capabilities related to these. As a result I have been forced to forgo any systematic analysis of the men's cognitive characteristics and of the more broad-scale social psychological and sociological aspects of revolutionary behaviour. . . . Hopefully, I have not created a procrustean bed of psychological reductionism, in which there is no room for analysis of other aspects of the revolutionary process.

Yet, in spite of his consciousness of the danger, and of his own wide historical knowledge of the "other aspects of the revolutionary process," Wolfenstein's Freudian-Lasswellian approach either tumbles him into the reductionist abyss or leaves him constantly teetering on the edge. Indeed, as I said at the beginning, the power of *The Revolutionary Personality* is that its very success in using the Freudian-Lasswellian method pushes that method to its limits, highlighting for us its built-in weaknesses. It demonstrates, conclusively I believe, that an interest "exclusively in the motivations of the subjects," detached from an integral and corresponding analysis of the other, social-historical aspects of behaviour is an exhausted mine.

One quotation from Wolfenstein will illustrate the danger. "Although much experience comes between the first year of life and full adulthood, there should be indications in that first

[3] The role of judgment in history is perhaps best handled in Louis Mink, "The Autonomy of Historical Understanding," *History and Theory*, Vol. V, No. 1, 1966.

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year of what the adult will be like and, *therefore*, of what his political behaviour will be like [my italics]." For instance, on the basis of Lenin's basic mistrust ("highly speculative," as we have seen), Wolfenstein asserts that "His adult behaviour should be characterised by attempts to make his environment less risky, both by keeping the initiative himself and by creating structures which would leave him less exposed. Thus we would seem to have here one root of his later creation of an organisation subject to his directives alone." Wolfenstein may, in fact, be right; but the jump from Lenin's first year to the creation of the tight-knit Bolshevik party is breathtaking. And the "therefore" leading to political behaviour covers over the problem with an assertion, rather than a demonstration from the evidence.

That "therefore" is the crux of Lasswell's "Private Motives, Public Agencies" (if I may paraphrase Mandeville's "Private Evils, Public Benefits" adage). Lasswell's work was a brilliant, pioneering effort to translate Freudian clinical psychology into political psychology.[4] But like Freud's own "psycho-historical" work (especially the Woodrow Wilson book), it is over thirty years old—and outdated. As yet, there has been little or no demonstration that we can move confidently from personality studies to political behaviour. The major effort in this direction, the *Authoritarian Personality* (1950) studies (the model for Wolfenstein's effort, though he is analysing dead subjects through historical materials instead of live ones by depth-interviews and questionnaires), has not reassured us, as Edward Shils and others have pointed out.[5] Some sort of connection obviously exists, but we cannot understand the connection merely as an abstract generalisation, divorced from an exhaustive analysis of the concrete political condition.[6]

DOES THE FAULT lie in the effort to construct a "revolutionary personality," good, so to speak, for all revolutionists? In yearning for a "model," rather than the analysis of limited and time-bound situations in the hope of producing "limited generalisations"? For example, why does Wolfenstein choose Lenin, Trotsky, and Gandhi in an effort to derive hypotheses? Would not Stalin have been a better choice to fill out the triumvirate, avoiding the problem of a new and different social context provoked by Gandhi, and offering us at least a "Bolshevik revolutionary personality" with which to begin? And if one were serious about constructing a "revolutionary personality" *per se*, would not a choice from a number of revolutions—perhaps Cromwell in the Puritan, Washington in the American, Robespierre in the French—be methodologically more useful? Wolfenstein, of course, can answer that he expects others to make such studies. But this is to beg the question. The wider option might immediately have shown that revolutions themselves are different—is the Indian "Revolution," in fact, of the same order as the Russian Revolution?—and require different revolutionary personalities to lead them.

One of the most astute students of comparative revolutions, Chalmers Johnson, has put the challenge directly: "The aspect of psychological studies of revolution that we do not find useful is the misinformed generalisation of micro data without reference to a macro model—namely, the derivation of revolution from psychological studies of individual revolutionaries.... Psychological data on revolutionaries must be related to the social system."[7] If Johnson is right, as I believe he is, then the effort to study motivations separate from social context, leaving the latter to be "filled in" by others, is from the beginning methodologically ill-conceived.

In his better moments, Wolfenstein himself knows this. Thus, for example, commenting on Gandhi's increasing turn to a feminine identity, Wolfenstein remarks,

> In any case, for many Indians, and for Gandhi as he grew older, the British model of masculinity, with its martial ideals and emphasis on physical courage, was a discomforting one. In fact, it was as alien to the major stream of traditional Hindu ideals to act out one's manhood in British terms as it was difficult for Gandhi to

[4] Freud himself, of course, prepared the way, first with *Totem and Taboo* (1912–13) and then with such works as *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego* (1921), and *Civilization and its Discontents* (1930). For one of the best discussions of Freud's application of psychoanalysis to political and historical subjects, see the relevant chapters in Philip Rieff, *Freud: The Mind of the Moralist* (1960). A recent book of interest on this subject is Paul Roazen, *Freud: Political and Social Thought* (Knopf, 1968).

[5] See, for example, the collection of articles on the *Authoritarian Personality*, edited by Christie and Jahoda (1954).

[6] One of the best efforts to view the "authoritarian personality" in terms of concrete political conditions, with the result being varied political behaviour, is Seymour Martin Lipset, *Political Man* (1960).

[7] Chalmers Johnson, *Revolution and the Social System* (Hoover Institute Studies, 3, 1964, pp. 22–26). Harry Eckstein, "On the Etiology of Internal War," *History and Theory*, IV, 2, 1965, is another important work on the typology of revolutions.

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think of himself as a man at all. This "fit" was to be one of the essential aspects of Gandhi's success in Indian revolutionary politics, just as Lenin's ready assumption of a paternal role was to aid him greatly in his revolutionary struggle.

The "fit" is what allows us to move from the micro to the macro model; from the individual to the collective psychology, and back again. This movement seems most fruitfully handled in terms of the relation of leader and led.[8] Thus, we need to ask questions such as: Are the reasons why the leader is ready to lead similar to or different from the reasons why his followers are ready to follow? Can we treat the "led" as one category, or do we need to differentiate between immediate disciples and general supporters? between different groups of supporters? What is the communication system used by the leader, and how does it relate to the technological structure of his society? Are the psychological qualities that make a revolutionary leader the same as those that allow him to take power? to institutionalise his revolution? to provide for a successor? To answer such questions is to move away from the exclusive concentration on individual motivations and to set them in the necessary social framework. It is to go from "models" to "historical complexity."

I SUSPECT THAT ONE REASON for the passion of some political scientists for a model, of a revolutionary personality, or other political actor, is the desire to be able to predict. Thus, on another front, James Barber (of Yale University) is engaged on a study of various American Presidents, in an effort to establish a "style" of leadership, revolving around active-passive categories. On this basis, he would like to forecast the performance of a future Coolidge or a Hoover as President. Alas, like Wolfenstein, Barber is better in his particular analyses, illuminating the specific, historical performances of American Presidents, than he is in setting up his model.

The moral, I believe, is clear. Psycho-historical inquiry requires profound and careful attention to the analysis, in this case, of individual personalities interacting with the historical context that shapes and is shaped by them. It errs, as in Freud-Bullitt, when it "reduces" its political figures to pathological specimens. It goes astray, as in Wolfenstein, when it "inflates" them too quickly to "personality types" (revolutionary or authoritarian).[9] And it jumps into the void, as with the Lasswellian formula, when it seeks to move unilaterally from the private actor to the public arena, without analysing the complex and changing interaction of the two, as well as the intermediary actors between them.

I HAVE BEEN suggesting indirectly, if not directly, throughout the earlier part of this article that the problems of psycho-historical inquiry are largely the problems of historical inquiry in general. Both aim primarily at the understanding of human behaviour in its "historical" dimension. Both run the danger of making false extrapolations and over-extrapolations from the data, and of misinterpreting evidence by poor judgment as to its relation to the "totality" of evidence. The psycho-historian runs the additional danger of reducing or over-reducing his materials to the psychological dimension; but so does the economic historian, the military historian, and so forth. Naturally, the psycho-historian uniquely needs to have a good, working knowledge of psychology, specifically psycho-analysis, *as it relates* to his historical interests. Nevertheless, the over-all problem of the validity and usefulness of psycho-historical inquiry falls under well-established rubrics in the philosophy of history.

Methodological problems remain, and these are the interesting ones. I should like to offer some comments on a few of them, in an effort to move the field forward: specifically, on the validity of analysing past figures; on the validation and verification of such an analysis; on the use of traditional materials, such as autobiographies; and on the use and development of "new" materials, *i.e.*, materials relating to subjects that have too often been overlooked or neglected.

It is frequently asserted that psycho-history is impossible because its subjects are beyond the reach of the analyst, that is, they are dead. If the aim is therapy, this is undoubtedly true. If the aim is psychoanalytic understanding of a personality, then surely it depends on the amount of material extant; where there is little or no pertinent material, psycho-historical

[8] In October, 1967, a Conference on Leadership, under the direction of Professor Dankwart Rustow (Columbia University), was held, with a special emphasis on the psychological dimension of the leader-led relation. The papers are scheduled to be published in the Summer, 1968, issue of *Daedalus*. My own effort to deal with a facet of this problem, "James Mill and the Utilitarians," is to be included in this collection, as well as James D. Barber's paper, "Sources of American Presidential Style: The Identity Crisis and Weak Presidents."

[9] There is a difference between Freud's construction of "oral," "anal," and "genital" character types, based on his clinical work, and the construction of political types, based on extrapolation of private motives to public agencies. That difference is exactly what is involved in the Lasswellian dilemma.

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inquiry obviously cannot be attempted. (Incidentally, it might be remarked that a patient who will not speak or go to an analyst is also a hopeless enterprise—a not unfamiliar clinical experience.) As Alexander George has pointed out, the clinician's ability to question his patient is limited to the patient's response, that is, there is almost no way of verifying the patient's picture of himself and the world around him: all the clinical analyst can have, more or less, is "psychic reality" as presented by the patient.[10] The psycho-historian, on the other hand, if lucky, will have a mass of relevant material: family, friends, and enemies. The result is a check, and double check, on the psycho-historian's interpretation of the general character pattern of his subject, from outside sources. Moreover, since he is interested in psycho-historical understanding, and not therapy, the historian will usually not be concerned with certain kinds of intimate data that might be missing from the written record. In terms of validity, then, there is no reason to abandon hope for psycho-history: quite the opposite.

As for validation and verification of a particular analysis, this is immeasurably aided by a special aspect of psycho-analysis itself: the phenomenon of over-determination. The problem of determinism in psycho-analysis is a point that bothers unsympathetic critics of psycho-analysis. Freud insisted that strict determinism prevailed in respect of psychic acts; there are no "accidents." For example, "free association," the basis of dream analysis and of therapy, is "free" only in the sense that it is not hampered by the censorship of "logical," "rational" thought and *mores*. It is not, however, undetermined. In fact, free association, as almost all of the other processes in psychoanalysis, is *over-determined*. Indeed, it is the latter phenomenon —the fact that the same word or symbol refers to many elements in the unconscious thought process, on the one hand, and that the single unconscious drive or pattern of behaviour will manifest itself in innumerable different conscious manifestations, on the other hand—that warrants the historian in his use of the evidence. Because the psychological phenomena are over-determined, the evidence can be abundant and self-confirming.[11] When this fact is placed next to the one made above, of the frequent existence of outside observations—by family or friends—we find ourselves quite comfortably esconced with the historian's traditional task of reconciling and interpreting conflicting and confirming evidence. The only difference in psycho-history is that the interpretation and confirmation of evidence must be done in terms of informed awareness as to the meaning and application of psycho-analytic theory. But then, what would one expect?

In this effort, new ways of using traditional materials, such as autobiographies, diaries, and letters, are needed. A sort of psycho-historical "diplomatics" is required. Luckily, Erik Erikson and others have turned their attention to this problem. For example, Reed College, in Portland, Oregon, will institute next year a project in Autobiography, approaching the subject from the vantage points of several disciplines. They will consider such questions as: *1*. Why does the autobiographer write about the self in the first place? *2*. How does the autobiographer claim to know what he does about the self, *i.e.*, what are the sources of self-knowledge? *3*. Is the autobiographical writing itself a way of realising and defining the self? Do his words tell him anything about the self? Is the writing itself a process of understanding, a working out of a point of view rather than a mere celebration of the past? *4*. What is the relation between the autobiographer and his society? How does he see the self formed by the world? How does he organise his work in response to what is outside the self? *5*. What problems does one incur in using the autobiography as a valid source of self-knowledge or truth? What about self-deception, rationalising, errors of memory or fact, the imposition of order, coherence and meaning on a complexity that does not have these qualities? Almost unwittingly, these questions are really psycho-historical questions.

Erikson, of course, is highly conscious of his interests. Working on Gandhi, as he has, he confronted the problem of Gandhi's autobiography and its "validity" head-on. Without trying to anticipate the sustained and subtle typology that Erikson has worked out for the subject (it will presumably be part of his Gandhi book, to be published shortly), I can remark that he—and all of us working in this field—must raise such questions as: why is the autobiography being written (the reason explicitly given being compared with the psycho-historian's own interpretation); at what psychogenetic stage in the writer's life (middle age? old age?); for what reason (to justify himself, to rediscover and renew his identity, to give a creative shape to his life?); within what literary tradition; at what point

[10] There is a new edition of Alexander and Juliette George, *Woodrow Wilson and Colonel House* (Dover). For the psychoanalyst's problem of outside verification, see Samuel Novey's "The Significance of the Actual Historical Event in Psychiatry and Psychoanalysis," *British Journal of Medical Psychology* (Vol. 37, No. 4, 1964).

[11] Cf. my "Group Psychology and Problems of Contemporary History," *Journal of Contemporary History*, April, 1968.

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in the development and history of his own country and culture; and so forth.... Almost all of the same questions must then be asked of ourselves, the psycho-historical readers, for the problem of what loosely we can call transference and counter-transference becomes of overwhelming significance at this point. In short, the interpretation of materials—a traditional historical problem—in psycho-history requires special consideration. I would like to suggest that the "spill-over" or "fall-out" effect on general history of this profoundly close way of looking at evidence may be substantial. It is part of the general problem of what Erikson so brilliantly described in his *Young Man Luther* as "The Meaning of Meaning It."

ONE CANNOT understand, however, either "meaning" on the ordinary level, or the "meaning of meaning it" on the psycho-historical level, of, say, an autobiography without understanding the social-historical context of the work. This is, of course, a truism; but as such it has been used to obscure the question of what should be covered under the heading of social context, For psycho-historical inquiry, it becomes increasingly apparent that the development and use of hitherto overlooked or neglected materials and subjects is requisite.

The most formative agency in shaping the human personality—the family—is such a subject. How to understand the deepest meaning of, for example, Western European political history which is so intertwined with the questions of authority and identity without having pondered on the family setting, for various countries, in which these two key items are first shaped? Or to weigh the role of guilt in, say, post-World War I Germany, as well as amongst the Allies, so sharply posed by the war guilt clause of the Treaty of Versailles and subsequent events, without trying to see the way in which Western families handle guilt for their members? On another level, what does it mean in modern society to pass through adolescence? (Philippe Ariès in his excellent book, *Centuries of Childhood* (1962)—a unique effort in this field—suggests that this stage of the individual's growth is a special and fairly recent Western social phenomenon.) Or to have a generational relation in which Fathers are not replaced, but displaced, by their Sons, and where the generational conflict becomes a major source of social change?[12] For too long left to the unimaginative sociologist or social historian, the new history of the family becomes a central concern for psycho-history.

Just as the history of the family has been neglected, so (and perhaps even more scandalously) has been the subject of death. How do societies, and individuals, deal with this traumatic subject? How do they come to terms with the inevitably ambivalent feelings of joy and guilt at one's own survival? (It is a strength of Wolfenstein's book that he is aware of the strong feelings of Lenin at the death of his father, and then of his brother, Sasha, and the powerful effect these events had upon his later life; of the seemingly immobilising effects of Lenin's death on Trotsky and the bearing of this on the succession to power of Trotsky versus Stalin; and of Gandhi's burden of guilt, incurred while making love to his wife with his father dying in the next room.) Dr. Robert Lifton, for example, has taken up Freud's rather unsatisfactory handling of the "death instinct" and the psychology of mourning, and is attempting to reformulate the subject. He is trying to show how important death and death symbolism are for individuals and societies, by using as his instance the Hiroshima Bomb deaths and the effects on the survivors.[13]

In this connection, it is worth noting that psycho-history is as much concerned with changing and modifying the theories and concepts of psycho-analysis itself as it is with looking at historical materials in a new way. Thus, the idea of the Oedipus complex as a formative, socially requisite way of a boy becoming a man, serving as the mechanism of generational social change, replaces the more orthodox Freudian emphasis on the dangers and destructiveness of the Oedipal situation. And the emphasis on sex is seen as more legitimate for 19th-century Victorian reality than, perhaps, for the 20th century, where themes of violence and death appear more useful to investigate in our increasingly "existential" world. In turn, of course, these revised psycho-analytic concepts are then reapplied to the concerns of psycho-history.

This is not to say that sex, as defined by Freud, has lost its central role in the formation of character, and, ultimately, by displacement, rationalisation, and other mechanisms, in the formation of culture and society. It is, rather, to place other major psycho-genetic shaping forces on a more equal basis. One need hardly add that much remains yet to do in the "history of sex" itself. Most importantly here, we need to study the connection of sex with economics. In a rather convoluted, but immensely interesting,

[12] For a fascinating treatment of this topic, see Howard R. Wolf, "British Fathers and Sons, 1773-1913," *The Psychoanalytic Review* (Summer, 1965).

[13] Cf. Robert Lifton, "Psychological Effects of the Atomic Bomb in Hiroshima: The Theme of Death," *Daedalus* (Summer, 1963); and *Death in Life: Survivors of Hiroshima*, Random House, New York, 1968.

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article, Peter Cominos has explored the relationship between the two in the 19th century, showing how classical economics' model of *Homo Economicus* was matched with a model of *Homo Sensualis*.[14]

Similarly, the problem of race relations can usefully be explored with the sexual-psychological factor in mind, against a background of concern with economics—see, for example, O. Mannoni, *Prospero and Caliban: The Psychology of Colonization* (1950), and P. Mason, *Prospero's Magic* (1962). And more recently, as in Christopher Lasch's book, *The New Radicalism in America* (1965), the role of women in society has been approached, though hesitantly, in these same terms. All of this work coheres with an interest in the role of individual and social attitudes to masculinity and femininity, aggressiveness and passivity, violence and death, attitudes which so powerfully dominate our lives and the historical events in which we "act out" and embody our personal and collective feelings.

ENOUGH HAS BEEN SAID, I hope, to indicate that psycho-history is a real and viable field. The problem now is to get on with the hard work of tilling it. What we need are methodological discussions on such questions as the use of various materials—letters, diaries, autobiographies, medical reports, etc.; historical treatments of needed and neglected topics, such as the family and death, which are essential for a sure handling of the social-historical context; and the employment of any and all such work in actual, specific psycho-historical inquiry. In the process, we shall come to a better understanding of ourselves and of the history that we have been making, consciously and unconsciously. That, surely, is the aim of all good historical inquiry.

[14] Peter T. Cominos, "Late-Victorian Sexual Respectability and the Social System," *International Review of Social History* (VIII, 1963, Parts I and II).

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NOTES & TOPICS

"The Meanness of It All . . ."

THERE IS LITTLE DOUBT that the hopes for economic growth that we all once held are no longer capable of being held by serious people. The British, it seems, are not willing to choose growth—or, at least, seem unable to achieve it. The question that now arises is whether, out of this diminished pool, to support consumption or welfare. The answer is inevitable. In a feudal-capitalist-social democracy such as we now inhabit, welfare will not be chosen.

Further, what welfare there is increasingly goes to those who are already in a position of advantage rather than to those who are euphemistically called the disadvantaged! There seems to be a congenital tendency to arrange public services so that whoever is in a position to take an opportunity to use them will do so; those who cannot—and need help to do so, *i.e.*, the very poor, or the very disadvantaged—are neglected.

IT IS INEVITABLY the case that educational expenditure is given to people who come and ask to have education given to them; thus, after a hundred years of national education in England the north still lags behind the south, the manual workers behind the white collar workers, girls behind boys—in fact, the findings of sociological research now enshrined in enormous official reports like Crowther, Robbins, Newsom, and Plowden seem to confirm the view that in education the race is to the strong. We know that the same thing is true of the National Health Service. You get better treatment in the teaching hospitals; the social class composition of the patients in a teaching hospital is usually weighted towards the white-collar classes. General practitioners in white-collar suburbs prescribe more and better medicine than general practitioners in working-class suburbs. In other fields too—open spaces, libraries, museums, the theatre—public money supports those who are interested in what public money has to provide.

If we were to wish to shift the weight of expenditure towards the deprived sectors (and areas) of our national life, it is fairly clear that we must have economic growth—since the lack of economic growth is itself a cause of the poverty in a number of instances (notably, that arising from unemployment). But it is also fairly clear that the process of change does little or nothing in the short run to reduce the degree of inequity in our social arrangements. Moreover, it seems as though many of the arrangements that are made to correct these inequities, far from bolstering up the poor, help those who can help themselves. The Poverty Programme in the United States has proved the same point.

What, if anything, is to be done? One possibility is to do what Mr. Clark and others have suggested—to put most services on a pay-as-you-come basis, with appropriate arrangements for getting credit, and try to use public funds to get at the really poor. Contrary to what Beatrice Webb and Beveridge believed, however, poverty is not self-liquidating. There *are* social casualties to whom aid has continually to be given. Further, catastrophe can happen to any of us: we may be the irredeemable social casualty. I still feel that the original plan of public services open to all, with a bias towards equality, was the right one. But we now see how difficult this plan is to realise.

My own new research shows conclusively that the great weight of educational expenditure (which has trebled over the last ten years or so) has gone to the educationally advantaged families. I would be the last to deny that this is almost inevitably so, and I am not wholly sure that it is wrong. Clearly, education given to a family which is panting for it is likely to be more immediately worthwhile than education forced down some reluctant northern throat. But that the immediate and long-term consequences are a deprivation of welfare services for the poor seems to me to be irrefutable. The increase in public expenditure has made the privileged more privileged, and has *not* made the less-privileged less privileged than they were before. Further, there is evidence that the weight of taxation has shifted against the poor. My own view, for what it is worth, is enshrined in the book on which I am now working, on

JOHN VAIZEY, *who comments on Colin Clark's article* [ENCOUNTER, *May*], *is Professor of Economics at Brunel, a new university in London. He is the author of* The Costs of Education (*1958*), The Economics of Education (*1962*), *and* Education in the Modern World (*1967*). *His special memorandum on school reform was included in the July 1961* ENCOUNTER, *in which C. A. R. Crosland (later Secretary of State for Education) re-formulated socialist educational policy.*

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inequality in contemporary societies, and I will not rehearse the plot at this stage. But it seems to me that any attempt to shift the finance of any large public service on to a scheme for loans, mortgages, insurance, coupons or vouchers, is part of what R. M. Titmuss has called "the computer complex." Inevitably, if you adopt any such relatively clear-cut—even simple-minded—solution such as Mr. Colin Clark proposes, namely to charge realistic fees and then to finance the fees by interest-free loans, there will have to be exceptions; and the exceptions will multiply until we end up in a state of confusion and muddle worse than the state from which we sought to escape.

BUT UNIVERSITIES HAVE special reasons for being poor. One of them is that the long overdue plans for expansion—of the number of students, the number of universities, and the amount of research—were adopted at a time when it was expected that a moderate rate of economic growth could be achieved. The plans would have been smaller and meaner if they had been adopted later, or earlier.

Next, the British rich are undeniably mean. In the United States, for reasons of public pride or a desire for immortality, wealthy families regularly endow universities, foundations, and the whole paraphernalia of the academic-cultural environment. Just as in the 18th century a writer or philosopher found, if he could, a noble patron, so today the names of Ford and Rockefeller, Kennedy and Harkness, ensure for one or other of us a comfortable life while we contemplate the transitory verities. The English upper class—and the Scottish as well—has put about the view that it is too poor and too heavily taxed to do this. It is, of course, quite untrue. A noble house is usually very well off. The merest sight of the former Earl of Home's home is enough to see that poverty in aristocratic circles is a relative term. Many of these families pay little or no death duties, since the wealth is tied up in trusts which are immortal. The trusts minister to the comfort, education,

Lost Gratifications

Essex University (Colchester)

WHEN THE STUDENTS *protest that what they want from a university is not training but education, they are surely right. Unfortunately this is only one plank in their platform. And in any case, of course, even on this issue they have betrayed themselves. For by imitating the tactics of industrial disputes they in effect reveal themselves to be just what Lord Bowden insists that they are—technicians in training, not free citizens pursuing their education. And they have betrayed themselves more ignominiously still. For when they forcibly prevent the public expression of views they disagree with, they are behaving worse than we expect of technicians in training, or even of unskilled factory hands on strike. And yet the hysterically self-righteous arrogance with which they threaten and intimidate the majority may be, in some cases, overcompensation for the contemptuous assumption that they would let themselves be filed down to fit the graduate slots that society had designed for them. This is one reason why arts students have given as much trouble as social scientists. . . .*

There is a pungent smell of spilt religion about their excited participation in the mass assemblies and unstructured seminars where ideas about literature may be considered sometimes, but the images of literature never. My colleagues learned long ago that literature musn't be used as a substitute for religion, but they remain hungry for the lost gratifications of communal worship. Given the windfall opportunity, they eagerly direct upon the youthful collective all those utopian and messianic sentiments, and sentimental fervours, which their fathers or more probably their mothers gratified in literature. More improbably, slender aesthetes suddenly reveal themselves from behind the thick-set disguise of many years; and people who have never been heard to describe a poem as "beautiful" apply the word, intensely, to some concerted action by their youthful belligerent comrades. . . .

Lord Annan was right in the Lords to insist that what we are faced with isn't student disaffection so much as the abandonment of all the unwritten punctilios which have in the past controlled relations among dons. And so, despite the brave words of the vice-chancellors a fortnight ago, it isn't at all certain that the egalitarian challenge will be met. For a vice-chancellor can be only as brave as his senate allows him to be. And inevitably, most university senates reflect the lack of nerve of the British intelligentsia in general, when the egalitarian ethos is presented to them in sufficiently religiose language. There can hardly be a university senate in the country which does not include among its members some who have carried a torch for that notoriously impotent bridegroom, the international working class, who will breathlessly settle instead for being seduced by the international student youth.

Donald Davie

in THE LISTENER (*London*)

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succour of members of the house along strict lines of primogeniture—the children of the first marriage come before the second marriage, and the second wife before the third wife, and so on. In all of this the odd cheque of twenty guineas for the Christ Church War Memorial is all that the lawyers let the family scrape up. Were it not for the newly rich Jews, Oxford would barely be able to open its doors. It follows, therefore, inevitably that the State has had to step in to a greater extent than in America.

The third reason for poverty in the universities is the unwillingness of university people to go out and look for money. English middle-class academics, like the rest of the English middle class, seem wedded to a concept of seedy unadventurous poverty which makes any bold plan for the development of the universities, independent of what the U.G.C. hands out, almost impossible of contemplation. In these circumstances, when one studies Mr. Clark's "unorthodox proposal" one sees its attractiveness but realises it could never work, or that if it worked it would have the opposite effect to what he intends.

Underlying Mr. Clark's article, and recent articles, one see a reaction to the drift of British society into an increasingly seedy tyranny. Many of the actions of recent governments bear resemblance to the activities of governments just before some kind of dictatorship takes over. In these circumstances, one has to look carefully at the proposition that the enormously complicated mechanism of the so-called Welfare State is not only defeating its own objects by functioning in a different way from that which was intended when it was set up, but is embracing us all in a complex world of bureaucratic apparatus, with reality hiding behind a mask of amiable and incompetent benevolence. It is the over-burdening of the welfare services which has been one of the main allegations of the racial discriminators in immigration policy. At the same time, it looks as though, while the immigration officers are stopping the blacks from coming in, they will be charged with stopping the whites from going out—unless they have paid some huge lump sum in tax to the Government to compensate for the cost of having been educated free, kept fit by the National Health Service, and fed by the welfare food scheme. In this situation, one wonders whether, should the possibility ever come of re-founding the constitution of our state, a demarcation might be drawn severely between what is a personal responsibility and what is a public responsibility—and in these circumstances, whether or not the universities should not fall more on the private than on the public side?

John Vaizey

The End of the Revolt?

Letter from Berlin — By Kai Hermann

Once again, the tinkle of broken glass. Once again, a platoon of the anti-authoritarian forces has stormed an enemy outpost: students of the Free University have occupied the Rector's residence. Then, according to the established ritual, the police arrive. A brief engagement follows to secure a strategic vantage-point, a thinly-armoured cupboard proves inadequate as a barricade. Then something very strange happens.

Students and policemen make themselves comfortable in the well-upholstered armchairs. Sandwiches and beer, fraternally consumed in the small hours of the morning, create something like solidarity between the occupying forces. And in a burst of enthusiasm for the police commissar, Herr Textor—who, unlike His Magnificence, has proved himself a patient and sympathetic negotiator—the students discover a new war-cry: "*Textor for Rector!*"

In the meantime, the notorious *Kommunarde* Fritz Teufel is parading through the *Auditorium Maximum* in His Magnificence's robes. But the joke is getting a bit stale: a twelve-months run for one gag is enough. The students' justified discontent with the methods being used by the University authorities (and they have now lost support even in the City Parliament) seems to be petering out in fruitless "discussions," in pointless demonstrations and happenings. *Die Helden sind müde*: the heroes of yester-year are tired, sick, run down. Three deaths have been too much. The visible results have been too unconvincing. During and after the "Easter Days"[1] the pseudo-revolutionaries have over-reached themselves and the predictable has happened. The grotesque misinterpretation of the possibili-

[1] See my "Germany's New Left" in the April and Theo Sommer's article in the June Encounter.

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ties and limitations of their political role has led the students leaders to a *débâcle*.

They saw themselves, falsely, as the *avant-garde* of a Proletarian Revolution. They were to be the spark to set alight the powder-barrels of revolution. Then, when the spark failed to catch, they made of the universities their own powder-barrels. But it amounted to only a few *Knallfrösche* and some Coca-Cola bottles re-functioned as Molotov cocktails.

Certainly, it had begun with critical insights and resolutions which promised something better. Even Dr. Herbert Marcuse had pleaded for patience in a slow, lengthy period of evolution. Rudi Dutschke had spoken of "a long march"—as against "instant Pop Revolution"—and declared the use of violence in the cities to be counter-revolutionary. Alas, reason and sober analysis soon went under in a welter of smoke-bombs and police-truncheons.

Action had dictated theory: not the other way around. Certainly, it was the realisation that the

A Critical Word at "The Court . . .

THE EVENTS OF THE PAST YEAR—*in Germany in the U.S.A.—have convinced me that the student protest movement, despite its small numerical strength and lack of organised power, has revealed new and important possibilities for the overthrow of established social structures. From all this, a society could emerge, not only with a socialist means of production, but with a radically de-bureaucratised power-structure, opening up new, concrete potentialities for political freedom. Still, let us face the fact that the reactionary and traditional pressures on the Left are strong enough to have led many students astray. As a result, they have been led into actions which threaten to diminish—as I see it—their already somewhat limited chances of success. These misgivings, then, are the basis of the following critique.*

The new tactics, as we know, are derived from the non-violent strategy of the American civil rights movement. These tactics can *be successful against a bureaucratised power structure. And they acquire a new significance when we are confronted with commercial control of the mass media on the present scale. They enable us to infiltrate a system which we cannot hope to overthrow by frontal attack.*

Moreover, these tactics operate in a new context. By creating images of a dehumanised world, Pop Art has succeeded in caricaturing, in making ridiculous, many of our everyday assumptions. These images provoke violent defence-reactions, but also a salutary shock-effect. This, in turn, leads to a reappraisal of unexamined thought-processes, conscious and repressed. Furthermore, these tactics have a common trait: they are part of a game in which the other side is compelled, however unwillingly, to play along with the opposition. These tactics can hurt, just because they cannot kill.

In psychological terms, these tactics represent, in a ritualised form, a kind of blackmail directed against parents who are at the same time both neglectful and permissive. For that reason, they are only likely to be effective if they are employed in an adult, that is, in a considered way. Yet even when considered, since their outward manifestation is too often at a school-boy level, they are not likely to appeal to the over-thirties. The new tactics, in other words, cannot be divorced from the generational problem. Those who are tempted to join in, though belonging to a different age-group, fail to recognise the character of this youthful protest —or, alternatively, show in the development of their own personalities regressive affinities with a different age-group.

THE PRIMARY MISCONCEPTION *of the SDS lies in the assumption that we are acting within the context of a revolutionary situation. But there can be no question of that! Not one of the generally accepted symptoms of a revolutionary situation is present. What is most certainly lacking is any widespread sense that present conditions are intolerable. Ours is a situation where the limits of the tolerable have yet to be defined, where injustice is not yet manifest, where the spirit of protest has yet to grip the masses—for us, therefore, enlightenment must precede agitation. Under these circumstances a person who speaks and acts as if revolution were on the agenda is simply deluding himself.*

A second misconception is that we are acting within the framework of an internationally organised anti-capitalist protest movement. There can be no question of that, either. We have a duty to protest against the barbarities carried out by the Americans in the name of freedom in Viet Nam. But a purely emotional identification of this kind —with the Vietcong, with the Negroes in the slums, with the guerrillas in Brazil, with the Red Guards or the heroes of the Cuban revolution— has no political value. The various situations are as different as the problems they raise and the methods appropriate to their solution.

JÜRGEN HABERMAS, Professor of Philosophy and Sociology at the University of Frankfurt-am-Main, recently addressed a national conference of the radical leaders of Germany's left-wing student organisations, and offered a critical analysis of the background of recent student unrest. Professor Habermas has been one of the leading Marxian intellectual influences on the *SDS*. The *Frankfurter Allgemeine* called Habermas' critique "the most important paper given at the Congress" (and it reported that when he spoke of "certain roaming jesters at the court of our self-appointed revolutionaries" he had the poet Hans Magnus Enzensberger in mind).

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System was not open to frontal attack that had led to the employment of those "guerrilla tactics" first worked out in the United States. For once, German revolutionaries had walked on the grass, and at long last fun was being poked at our stuffy German *Obrigkeit*. Then, one day, we put on our crash helmets and charged the police cordons, and almost persuaded ourselves that these costly, ill-conceived street battles—banner-poles, upturned trucks and all—amounted to "revolution."

INASMUCH AS THE RADICAL STUDENTS thought of themselves as heroes of the barricades, they were bound to see in the methods of the police a campaign of "Fascist intimidation." Yet had the "system" taken the revolutionaries only half as seriously as they took themselves, it would have turned to something rougher than water-cannons and truncheons. The rebels began to lose their sense of reality. They saw themselves as Freedom Fighters and shrieked blue murder whenever they saw a police helmet. That Fascist states are

. . . *of our Self-Appointed Revolutionaries*"

THIS FALSE APPRECIATION *of the situation appears to have rendered the most active elements in the student revolt incapable of understanding either the context within which they have to work or the nature of the tactics available to them.*

Protest actions, whose significance is essentially symbolic, become confused in the minds of the old SDS-*hands with revolutionary actions* per se. *A red flag hoisted at the right moment on the right roof can be a blow for enlightenment. But it is a very different matter when such an action deludes people into believing that they are storming the Bastille. What happened recently at the University of Frankfurt suggests that some people confuse the occupation of a university with a* coup d'état. *So serious a confusion of symbol and reality satisfies the medical criteria of pathological delusion.*

These "pseudo-revolutionary tactics" lead to the sort of behaviour which seeks a polarisation of forces at any price. This short-sighted approach precludes an alliance with other progressive forces within society. It also ignores the value of those institutionally guaranteed rights and liberties that exist in our society.

IN THE PAST FEW MONTHS *this false revolutionism has fed on precisely those weaknesses of the intellectuals which, when they quit the realm of purely individual psychology and become politically active, can lead to catastrophic results. I have in mind the kind of agitator who, having lost touch with reality, lives only for the applause of the masses, who gets his kick out of transitory narcissistic satisfaction, and pushes the movement from one violent action to another to flatter his own self-importance. I have in mind the intellectual activist who, immunised against experience, uses the colourless vocabulary of orthodoxy to prevent any disturbance of his own peace of mind. Finally, I have in mind certain roaming jesters at the court of the self-appointed revolutionaries who, having so long and unfruitfully aped the gestures and diction of the 1920s, have proclaimed themselves poets of the Revolution.*

Because the most activist students cannot see that the success of their actions depends on effectively-staged appeals to "legitimate power structures"—residual, perhaps, but still valid—they deceive themselves about a number of things. First, they confuse the reactions of a state which, because it still sticks to the rules, is willing to join in protest-games, with naked repression of a Fascist kind. They underestimate for this reason the potential power of a state which one day could really move towards open suppression of protesting minorities.

IF THE PROTEST MOVEMENT *really wants to pursue its radical purpose of de-bureaucratising the power-structure—something compatible with the functional needs of advanced industrialism—and is not only concerned with verbal self-satisfaction, its tactics must be more realistic—*

—first of all, about our historical position: we are not moving towards a period of revolution, either manifest or concealed;

—realistic about the tacit and legal assumptions upon which democratic opposition can still build, but which it can quickly lose. A purely abstract struggle against existing institutions would be as senseless as it was self-destructive.

—realistic about the limited progress which can be attained even under the reactionary conditions of the past twenty years. These isolated advances should be used as beachheads. They ought in no case to be abandoned in favour of dogmatic and indiscriminate pseudo-revolutionary gestures.

—realistic about the limitations of our own field of political action. Without the support of groups with access to the opinion-building media, students cannot hope to gain access to these media themselves. Again, without the support of the trade union movement they are deprived of the one weapon—the political strike—which can guarantee our present constitution against those "emergency situations" with which our rulers are so concerned.

—realistic, finally, about the theoretical presuppositions of our praxis. *Generalisations, even at a relatively high level of abstraction, are certainly need. But we should be clear that so far they are based on flimsy empirical evidence. No one should identify himself with some ideal state of consciousness of the "enlightened masses," to come about in the future, and proceed to allow himself to act in its name in the conditions that exist today.*

Jürgen Habermas

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accustomed to suppress Revolution with machine-guns and concentration camps—such things were forgotten in the euphoria of those days.

And since it was "Fascism" they were up against, they were no longer able to believe in, and no longer wanted, mere tactical successes. What had been planned as a demonstration—as a symbolic action—became the reality of Revolution itself. Occupying a faculty building, or even a whole university, the students persuaded themselves they had significantly altered social reality. University institutes were "socialised" and renamed after heroes of the revolutionary past (Marx, Liebknecht, Rosa Luxemburg). When, after some days, the exhausted occupiers handed back—voluntarily or otherwise—the liberated zones to the class enemy, what remained but a lot of work for the painters and the glaziers and the carpenters? And the depressing fact that at bottom nothing had changed at all?

Once upon a time they had looked for a popular base, for mass support, for solidarity with workers and intellectuals. But instead of solidarity they had brought about polarisation. Anyone who couldn't or didn't see the world as our *Revolutionsromantiker* did was written off as a Liberal, a Social Democrat, or something worse, if possible. In any case he was on the wrong side of the barricades. The alternatives were Fascism or the authentic revolutionary socialism of the *S.D.S.*

The students, in possession of the pure milk of the doctrine, became intolerant in their behaviour, offending many who would have otherwise have sympathised with them. Worse, the dogmatic attitudes of these enemies of everything doctrinaire prevented them from questioning their own assumptions—just at the point where they were becoming most questionable. Least of all could the working class be expected to follow the leadership of middle-class youths who knew little more of the conditions of modern industry than can be gathered from Marx and Engels' mid-19th-century descriptions of primitive capitalism.

This would-be *avante-garde* of the proletarian revolution showed itself in its true colours: it was a *bourgeois* revolt. Even the hastiest reading of Marx should have made the rebels self-critical. Instead, anxious to *épater les bourgeois*, and clutching the little Marxist classics, they deceived themselves as to their true position in society: as the sons and daughters of the privileged—and many of them, incidentally, exceptional students—nothing barred their way to the top. No wonder that in their over-emphasis on "action," in their aversion to organisation and their rejections of reforms "within the system," they showed themselves to be the heirs of bourgeois-anarchist traditions rather than of the radical working-class movement. Posters of Lenin decorated their walls, but Bakunin was in their hearts.

This false self-evaluation led inevitably to a contradiction between theory and practice, and ultimately to frustration. Finally even the most radical romantics were forced to see that the "proletarian uprising," of which they felt themselves a part, had no existence outside their fantasies.

The upshot of this revolt of the bourgeoisie-in-blue-jeans was a "cultural revolution." They have succeeded in their task of *Aufklärung*—often thanks to their techniques of provocation. They are setting about "re-structuring" their universities, and they have altered the political consciousness of many of their fellow-citizens. They have not altered the sub-structure, but they have most certainly shaken the political superstructure and in doing so they have—at least temporarily—stood Marx on his head. And that it should be young *Bürgerliche* who have thus revealed their doubts, even their despair, about the system may well have frightened a society so self-consciously bourgeois far more than a working-class revolt would have done. This fright could be a trump in the rebels' hand.

In spite of everything, then, they have brought to light some basic conflicts in our West German society. And they have succeeded—however imperfectly—in stripping Marxism of many of the distortions imposed upon it by Soviet Communism. One of the harshest left-wing critics of the young rebels, Professor Jürgen Habermas, could therefore conclude that the protest movement "has opened new perspectives" for radical changes in European society. A complete collapse of the movement might well rule out any such development, should the present mood of disappointment issue, not in self-criticism and realistic reappraisal, but in resignation and despair.

It will not be easy to come back from Utopia, to give up those naïve dreams of a pre-industrial idyll with no hierarchical authorities. Nor will it be any less painful to face the fact that they are not prophets but products, that they are children of the bourgeois-liberal world, and that such radical inspiration as they have is not from on high but out of this society with its problems and protests. Some are already turning to the prediction made by the ideologist of the Italian Communists, Lombardo-Radice: "... Out of the crisis of classical conservatism and out of the ruins of the great working-class organisations will come a new and original revolutionary liberalism...." A few are already reconsidering and learning to think again, trying to re-locate a point at which to stand in order to change, correct, reform their environment.

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Letter from Paris

Afterthought

AFTER WITHSTANDING all the major events of the century—the Popular Front, the 1940 defeat, the Nazi occupation, the Allied liberation, and the Algerian war—the universities were morally disrupted by the May revolution. In 1936 and 1940 and 1945, the section of the teaching body which shared the views of the party or the movement in power, did not attempt, by threats and intimidation, to force improvised changes on a hostile or passive majority. The Vichy government, in 1940, introduced measures which harmed some teachers and afflicted the conscience of nearly all. But although the Vichy Minister of Education was himself an academic, it was as a politician that he acted, not as a university professor.

No doubt injustices in the opposite sense were perpetrated in 1944, but here again the conflict of individual opinions did not too seriously undermine the university community as a whole. The teachers maintained the essential distinction between politics and the pursuit of learning: namely, complete freedom of thought and expression outside the lecture halls, and within them a sincere attempt at rational or objective thinking, together with a relationship between professional colleagus removed as far as possible from the passions of the market-place and governed by the unwritten law of freedom of political affiliation outside the university and neutrality within.

It goes without saying that this principle, like the Rights of Man, was an ideal not always achieved in practice. When it came to the election of a new member of the staff, for example, the voters in the University Assembly could scarcely fail to be influenced by the candidate's known political views. But this was never openly admitted. The matter was nearly always decided on a basis of professional argument, sound or unsound. And the principle, however imperfectly sustained, was not without value. I seldom knew anything of the political views of my assistants, or those of research students close to me, or of post-graduates preparing theses under my supervision. There were certain schools in which politics could not be wholly ruled out. A professor lecturing on Marx, for instance, was bound to be affected by his acceptance or rejection of Marxism-Leninism. But in general every effort was made to distinguish between *instruction* and *indoctrination*.

Sociological teaching can never escape some degree of partiality, both in what it says and does not say, and in the way it says it. But only bad faith can refuse to recognise the difference between two kinds of procedure: on the one hand, the impartial and undogmatic statement of facts and doctrines, and, on the other, the advocacy of a particular doctrine, such as Marxism, together with the rejection of everything opposed to it. Until May 1968, teaching in the French universities was on the former lines, and even in the socialist countries of Eastern Europe we may perceive here and there signs of a real return to the ideal of a liberal university. But a fraction of the May revolutionaries, first students and then some of the professors, embarked on the second course.

I beg my colleagues to reflect. That men in their sixties, such as myself, should be more or less drastically thrust aside in favour of younger men does not trouble me. It may be that the prolongation of human life, as well as the impatience of the young, calls for a more rapid change-over at the top, a more vigorous *circulation des élites*. But what does matter to me, as it does to the students and teachers who agree with me, is that the moral and intellectual values which the universities, with all their defects, have preserved should continue to be safeguarded.

IT WAS NOT the student revolt in itself which may have dealt a death-blow to the liberal universities, but the support given by a minority of teachers and lecturers to a movement initiated by the students, and the methods used to "intimidate" those who refused to turn the place upside-down and rush through reforms at a time of intellectual turmoil and open or concealed violence. For the first time in university history, members of university staffs tried to be both teachers and professional revolutionaries, both within and outside the university. The leaders of SNESUP openly proclaimed themselves *syndicalistes universitaires* and, from 27 May on, made no secret of their revolutionary activities. What is without precedent, they refused for several days to recognise the legally constituted government of the country as a valid party to the debate. Although, as functionaries of the bourgeois State they were as concerned as ever for their grade and salary, they sought to overthrow the power which has granted them all

PROFESSOR RAYMOND ARON'S *previous comments on the character and consequences of the French university revolt were published in the July and August* ENCOUNTER. *See also the Paris letters from Richard Mayne in the July and present number of* ENCOUNTER.

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the freedoms denied to their colleagues in the East—freedoms of which they were cheerfully prepared to deprive their French colleagues. And then they clamoured for university solidarity!

This revolutionary, or pseudo-revolutionary, posture on the part of a teachers' union was a breach of the unwritten law of the university community, which was even more gravely violated by their action within the university. That many students and teachers have wanted, and still want, "structural reform" is undeniable. But who is going to believe that for years past the sole aim of these teachers has been to entrust an unspecified degree of power, its precise nature and limits still undetermined, to student-teacher parity committees? And who will believe that votes by a show of hands in plenary or general assemblies can express the genuine intention of teachers and students?

Those who refused to join have been subjected to abuse (*"réactionnaire . . . mandarin . . . flic"*) and threats ("there will be no room for reactionaries in the university of tomorrow"). In this climate the appeal for solidarity has an exhilarating effect on some natures and serves others as an alibi for resignation. *Dialogue* and *contestation* are the current catch-words: but when all is said, when have the professors ever refused to discuss anything? How could the professors in the old university have taught, in an authoritative style, a comprehensive philosophy of life and society, when many of them (especially in the humanities) were, more or less, convinced Marxists?

The *université critique*, the *université d'été*, and the *université de contestation* have nothing in common with the objectives on which reasonable people are agreed: namely, to throw open the university "ghetto" to the outside world, to remind everyone that the universities have aims larger than themselves, and to transform human relationships, both within the teaching body and between teachers and students, which are often anonymous or hierarchic. But the *contestation permanente*, as its promoters make plain, is to be a mechanism of destruction, both political and scholastic, and in no sense a new method of education.

WE ARE BACK in a period in some respects resembling that of the 1930s. The threat then came from the extremism of the Right, and its designated victims refused to pay serious attention to aims that were openly avowed but seemed simply incredible. The doctrinaires of the *université critique* do not yet constitute a threat to society as a whole, but they make no bones about their intention of destroying the liberal universities. And again the intended victims refuse to be impressed by declared aims so foreign to their way of thinking that they cannot grasp them.

It is not a matter of rejecting student claims or seeking to restore conditions existing in the universities before May 1968, since this would be impossible. But we must, in my view, return a categorical *non* to the advocates of the *université critique*, and thereby bring the majority of teachers and students back to the side of reform and reason—including the greater number of those who were led astray by the illusions and the violence of last May.

Raymond Aron

"Déja vu"? . . .

Paris (1848)

THE THIN MAN *continued in a tragic voice:*

"Should not the Government ere now have abolished prostitution and poverty, by decree?"

This remark immediately won him the sympathy of the crowd, and he thundered against the corruption of the great cities.

"Shame and infamy! We ought to seize the rich as they come out of the Maison d'Or and spit in their faces! At least, let the Government not encourage debauchery! Yet our daughters and sisters are vilely maltreated by the officials of the custom houses——"

A distant voice observed.

"That's a good one!"

"Throw him out!"

"They extort taxes from us to pay for their orgies. For instance, the large emoluments of the actor——"

"My turn!" cried Delmar.

He leapt on to the platform, pushed everyone aside and took up his usual pose. Declaring that he despised such mean accusations he dilated on the actor's civilising mission. Since the theatre was the centre of national education, he was in favour of reforming it. First of all, there should be no more managers and no more privileges.

"That's right! No more privileges at all!"

The actor's performance inflamed the crowd, and the air was thick with revolutionary proposals.

"Down with academics! Down with the Institut!"

"No more missions!"

"No more matriculation!"

"Down with university degrees!"

"No," said Sénécal, "let us preserve them; but let them be conferred by universal franchise, by the people, the only true judge."

Flaubert, L'ÉDUCATION SENTIMENTALE *(1869)*

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Brecht, & the Dangers of Being a Classic

THE WORST—that is, from the point of view of party-line Brechtolators—the *very* worst has happened: Brecht, who would have celebrated his seventieth birthday this year, is fast becoming (indeed, has already become) a classic. And this certainly is a fate worse than death in the eyes of those whose main aim it must be to extract the maximum propaganda advantage from the existence of one of those rare phenomena: a major artist who can at least be made to appear to have been a loyal follower of the Communist party line.

No wonder that the problem of how one could stop the process—by which a major writer inevitably turns into a classic at a certain point in time after his death—dominated the Brecht Colloquy held in East Berlin in February to celebrate the master's seventieth birthday. I am not in a position to give a first-hand report of these proceedings; for, although the declared intention of the meeting was a discussion between *all* those who had contributed to the study and criticism of Brecht in East and West, I was not invited to attend. Neither were some other critics who have contributed a good deal, including the two most important Brecht scholars, Eric Bentley and Hans Mayer. There seems a certain lack of self-confidence discernible here on the part of the hosts, a lack of courage in confronting views which were, rightly or wrongly, suspected as being at variance with the prescribed orthodox attitudes. (But, then, Brecht himself did not advise courage and heroism as the most promising course of action). I have, however, received enough first-hand accounts of the occasion to be able to form a fairly adequate picture of the proceedings.

How, then, *can* one prevent a dead writer from turning into a classic? Various suggestions were put forward. Practical men of the theatre argued for a bolder treatment of the texts, even at the risk of disregarding the master's own very detailed prescriptions which are laid down in his meticulously elaborated model books. Ideologues argued for more attention to the political message. Others merely reiterated that Capitalism still was the Enemy and, after all, Brecht *had* been an anti-capitalist, therefore even in the present phase of capitalism his message still held good. Yet the production of Brecht's *St. Joan of the Stockyards* which had been announced as the focal point of the celebrations, did not materialise—officially because of the illness of Hanne Hiob, Brecht's daughter (from his first marriage) who was to have played the title role, but according to rumours also because the *Berliner Ensemble* had not yet succeeded in solving the main problem of this particular play, namely that Brecht's "Marxist" description of the workings of capitalism, which had been naïve even in 1932, appeared glaringly irrelevant in 1968. Paolo Chiarini (one of the most intelligent of the politically orthodox Brecht scholars and holder of the chair of German at Rome University) returned from East Berlin with the surprising thesis that, as Brecht's plays had indeed become somewhat obsolete in their attack against capitalism as a source of starvation in an age of affluence, the main emphasis should shift to Brecht's *theoretical* writings which were still topical and might become the source of *new* plays written in a Brechtian spirit and more relevant to the present phase of socio-economic development.

This thesis is as ingenious as it is pathetic. Brecht's writings on the aesthetics of theatre are fascinating and important. But they neither amount to a complete Marxist theory of drama, nor were they really intended to provide one. They are, to a large extent, concerned with the rationalisation of Brecht's artistic intuitions; that is why they ran closely parallel to Brecht's development as an artist and indeed never solidified into a coherent or consistent doctrine. In the last weeks of his life Brecht even went so far as to discard the concept of "Epic Theatre" which he had adopted in the early 1930s and retained, although he had constantly modified it, up to that point. In 1956 Brecht felt that "epic theatre" had been too narrow a concept and should be replaced by "dialectical theatre." In his early Marxist phase Brecht had banished "entertainment" from the stage; at the end of his life, he re-instated it, simply because his artistic practice had developed and changed in this direction. A call for giving priority to Brecht's theory over his work as a dramatist therefore amounts to no less than the desire to discard the substance in order to retain the shadow.

WHY, INDEED, SHOULD a great writer's apotheosis into a "classic" be regarded as such a terrible event? Because, it is argued, a "classic" is a writer who is appreciated for his historical importance rather than his topicality; because such a writer is accepted by the Establishment, and must therefore, by definition have become harmless, a toothless tiger. Brecht, it is said with horror, has become one of the most performed playwrights in *Western* Germany! Think of it: the bourgeoisie and the youth attend produc-

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tions of his plays without fear or trembling and do not even feel outraged by his barbs against the profiteers of 1930 or the Nazi régime. They simply enjoy the poetry, laugh at the jokes, shed a tear over the tragic fate of Grushe or Shen Te, Mother Courage or Galileo, and leave the theatre feeling rather good that Germany should have produced so eminent a poet. All this is only too true. What is curious and rather absurd is, however, that such a process should appear iniquitous to Marxists, that they should want to arrest it. For this, precisely, is what the doctrine of dialectical, historical materialism would proclaim to be inevitable. History is a dynamic process and the revolutionary situations of today turn into the established order of tomorrow. To endeavour to prevent a dead writer of genius from turning into an accepted classic is therefore tantamount to wanting to put a halt to the movement of history itself. It is one of the paradoxes of orthodox Marxism that this is in fact what it has been trying to do ever since Marx wrote the last lines of *Das Kapital*. The curiously Victorian atmosphere of countries dominated by this degenerate brand of Marxism is the direct result of so profound a misunderstanding of the old dialectician's method of thought. (Is it a coincidence that Brecht himself constantly refers to Marxism as the "teaching of the classics" while, at the same time expressing the utmost horror of ever becoming a classic himself? It seems to me a significant—if subconscious—acknowledgment of the underlying paradox that revolutionary doctrines, when they harden into holy writ, become overwhelmingly conservative influences.) It may be sad, but nothing the Brechtolaters can do will stop the process of history. It is quite impossible to ensure that the *political* relevance of works written decades earlier can be preserved in its original sharpness and virulence. Inevitably the human content and the aesthetic values of such texts will remain less affected by this process, and may, indeed, be enhanced by it. That is why even the most acid political pamphleteering loses its impact; why, for example, so brilliant and savage a political satire as *Gulliver's Travels* can, in the course of time, turn into a children's book of recognised harmlessness. This is not an argument against committed art, merely a reminder to committed artists that in the course of time the commitment is likely to evaporate.

THE FINAL CONSECRATION of Brecht's status as an accepted classic in his seventieth year is the appearance of what looks like a "definitive" edition of his works. Suhrkamp (Brecht's Frankfurt publishers) have now issued the fullest available collection of Brecht's writings in eight thin-paper volumes or—for students—in twenty paperbound pocket-books. This is as full and as definitive an edition of Brecht as we can expect and it represents the best possible compromise between the West German publisher's obvious desire for completeness and accuracy, and the East German Brecht heirs' equally obvious endeavour not only to withhold anything that might contradict the Communist image of Brecht (his diaries, letters, or the bitter poems against Stalin which are widely known to exist), but also to present those works which cannot be withheld (because they were issued in Brecht's own lifetime) in the least damaging variant. The previous edition of Brecht's works issued by Suhrkamp, which the present one replaces, repeatedly ran into difficulties: glaring omissions were pointed out by critics and these had then to be included in supplementary volumes. The present edition contains a good deal of hitherto unpublished material, and even a selection of political articles and essays. But its credibility as to completeness is pretty low. Some forty poems or fragments of poetry already published in the previous collection have been omitted, on the ground that the texts were inaccurate (or not by Brecht at all!). Many passages differ from the first editions. The argument here is that Brecht later altered them, as he probably did; but nevertheless these often radically amended and expurgated versions still apear under the original *dates*, thus in fact falsifying history—another symptom of highly un-Marxist thought on the part of the editors—by making it appear that Brecht had followed the party line before it had actually changed. One of the most foolish attempts to tamper with history is the omission of Brecht's most openly Stalinist stage work, *Herrnburger Bericht*, a cantata written to Paul Dessau's music for the Communist World Youth Festival of 1951: it contains some of his worse verse and most viciously scurrilous attacks on Western politicians. This cantata—duly published at the time—has vanished from the volumes of *Plays*. Three short poems from it are included in the *Poems*, with the following ingenuous note: "[they] belong to *Herrnburger Bericht*, a choral cantata for schools, which Paul Dessau composed (1951)." And that is all. As an example of falsification by equivocation this is highly typical. The existence of the work is admitted, its omission from a collection published as a *complete works* is not explained. Instead, by implication, the work is minimised as being of no account, having been written for schools. That Brecht wrote a whole set of *school operas* which are included in the collection (and which he himself regarded as among his most important works, precisely because they were written

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for didactic purposes) clearly has not occurred to the editors. Nor have they given any thought to the fact that a number of works on Brecht (including my own book and John Willett's *The Theatre of Bertolt Brecht*) amply document the work and give bibliographical data about its publication and performance, *not* in schools but in Berlin's *Deutsches Theater*. One asks oneself: what is more lamentable? the foolishness of such an attempt to make a work disappear? or the open mendaciousness with which it is carried out? That the work does not deserve to be reprinted, because it is artistically worthless and politically untenable, makes matters even worse. It could, after all, have been omitted for these very reasons—provided the fact was openly stated and a reference included to its publication elsewhere, so that scholars who wanted to consult it would know how to gain access to it. All of which goes to prove once again the obvious point that scholarly editions of modern writers simply cannot be expected from totalitarian countries—or even in Western countries, when the original material is under totalitarian control. For even the West German edition of Brecht's works bears the signs of East German censorship and political jargon, to the point of carefully altering chronological references to B.C. (before Christ's birth) to "before our chronology"!

IN SPITE OF ALL THIS the edition contains ample evidence to confirm what had long been known, but always strenuously denied by the followers of the party line, namely that Brecht's outwardly loyal attitude to the party and the East-German régime concealed highly sceptical views about Stalin, Ulbricht, the purge trials, censorship, etc. Today, when throughout the East European Communist world many leading and hitherto seemingly loyal personalities have been disclosing their true feelings, this can hardly even appear surprising. Brecht and Eisler, after all, belonged to a circle of intellectuals of considerable sophistication and intelligence. Men like Eduard Goldstuecker, the Czech Kafka scholar, or Ernst Fischer, the outstanding Austrian Communist theoretician, who now fight in the first rank of the movement for a "democratised Communism" can now be seen to embody the very attitude which Brecht himself took up. The recent publication of Brecht's conversations with the eminent German critic Walter Benjamin (who committed suicide in 1940 and was another member of this circle) show this only too clearly; as early as 1934 Brecht spoke with bitterness of the Stalinist terror and of the Zhdanovist campaign for "socialist realism."

"Are the People Infallible?" is the title of a poem which Brecht wrote at the time of the great Stalinist purges, apparently when he heard the news that his friend, the Soviet writer Sergey Tretyakov, had been executed:

My teacher,
the great and friendly one,
has been shot, condemned by a People's Court.
As a spy. His name is damned.
His books are destroyed. Talk about him
arouses suspicion and ceases.
What if he were innocent?

The sons of the people found him guilty.
The collective farms and factories of the workers,
the world's most heroic institutions
regarded him as an enemy.
No voice was raised in his favour.
What if he were innocent?

The people have many enemies.
In the highest positions
there sit enemies. In the most useful laboratories
there sit enemies. They build
canals and dams for the welfare of whole continents, and the canals
silt up and the dams
crumble. The ringleader must be shot.
What if he were innocent?

. . . . . .
. . . . . .

What five thousand have built, one man can destroy.
Among fifty who are condemned
one might be innocent.
What if he were innocent?

What if he were innocent—
How did he go to his death?

This is how Brecht really felt, at a time, when in public he strenuously supported Stalin's purge trials. The poems and plays he wrote to order at the time have wilted. It may well be that his ultimate claim to rank as a classic will rest upon poems like these.

Martin Esslin

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Thorns and Vanities: Ronald Firbank Revisited

By Neville Braybrooke

Claude Harvester was usually considered charming. He had gone about here and there, tinting his personality after the fashion of Venetian glass. Certainly he had wandered.... He had been to Arcadia, even a place where artificial temperaments so seldom get—their nearest approach being, perhaps, a matinée of The Winter's Tale. *Many, indeed, thought him interesting. He had groped so.... In the end he began to suspect that what he had been seeking for all along was the theatre. He had discovered the truth in writing plays. In style—he was often called obscure, although, in reality, he was as charming as the top of an apple-tree above a wall. As a novelist he was almost successful. His books were waited for... but without impatience.*

How prophetic that was fifty years ago ago—when D. H. Lawrence brought out *The Rainbow* in 1915, and *The Catholic Anthology* launched T. S. Eliot's "Prufrock." For Claude Harvester was none other than Ronald Firbank disguised. It is a self-portrait hard to beat, and it appears in *Vainglory*, the first of his novels to be published. Today it stands as a key-passage, holding all the clues: the wanderlust engendered by early childhood travels; the passion for masqued balls and theatricals; the pleasure taken in dressing up—tinting the personality as well as the nails; the pursuit of Arcadian no less than Athenian society; and the desire to be thought perpetually young, interesting and charming. To bore was the only sin.

Yet coupled with that perpetual ambition to be thought as charming as the top of an apple-tree, went a desire to hide behind the garden wall as well as peep over it. When shyness and boldness go together they frequently lead to scenes of "outrageous" behaviour, such outrages becoming the delight of the gossip-columnist. Friends remember Firbank's peculiar habits in restaurants—hiding under the table, for example, or refusing to eat more than one cherry or grape.

Once at the Eiffel Tower in Percy Street, a tough, baseball-playing American found himself put out of countenance by this behaviour. "I guess I'll have something *t'eat*," he said aggressively to the waiter. "What will you have, sir?" asked the waiter. "A rump-steak." He pored over the menu. "Yes, sir?" "And carrots." "Yes, sir?" "And boiled potatoes." "Yes, sir?" "And—And—Er—Er...." "Oh! violets," came Firbank's high-pitched voice from another corner of the room. I do not think that the author would have considered his behaviour outrageous on this occasion. Instead, he would have preferred to call it "orchidaceous." He would probably have been right.

Arthur Annesley Ronald Firbank was born on 17 January 1886. When he published *Vainglory* he was twenty-nine. For some years it had been his habit to write phrases and sentences on blue cards—"a mitred napkin," for instance, or "Miss Dawkins explored a sauceboat as though it [were] a liner"—and then out of these cards design his books like a series of mosaics. It was Sir Osbert Sitwell who first revealed this, and though some critics have questioned the existence of these cards, I have a letter from Sir Osbert (14 November 1962) in which he asserts quite categorically that they exist ("at Renishaw").

This method of designing books like a series of mosaics presents a special problem to the bibliographer, since there is no sure means of knowing the exact order in which the various pieces were assembled, nor even the order in which the designs were begun. All that can be done is offer the publication dates, and, as far as Firbank's books are concerned, these begin in 1915 with *Vainglory*. Then, in the next ten

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years in quick succession, there followed *Inclinations* in 1916, *Caprice* in 1917, *Valmouth* in 1918, *The Princess Zoubaroff* in 1920, *The Flower Beneath the Foot* in 1923, *Prancing Nigger* in 1924, and *Concerning the Eccentricities of Cardinal Pirelli* in 1926. *Cardinal Pirelli* was published a few months after his death which occurred on 21 May of that year, and eight years later *The Artificial Princess* appeared. This he had written before 1915, but had left to lie in a drawer because he had thought it too short to make a book. However, in 1934 Sir Coleridge Kennard wrote a preface and rescued it from oblivion. The printed text ran to less than eighty pages.

The New Rythum, set in New York, is the novel on which he was working when he died. Its seven brief chapters were published in 1962, and some "other pieces" were added to bump up the size of the book: these included passages from his childhood writings, his notebooks, a scene from his play *The Mauve Tower* which never got beyond typescript, and a reprint of *A Study in Temperament*, a sketch which had originally appeared with *Odette d'Antrevernes*, "A Fairy Tale for Weary People." When these two items had first been published together in a slim paper volume before he went up to Cambridge in 1906, they had come out under the signature of Arthur Firbank. "But the name of Arthur is horrid," he had confided to a friend, and eleven years later when he decided to reprint *Odette* separately, it was under the signature of Ronald Firbank that he published it: this "second" edition carried an advertisement for *Vainglory* "by the same author."

It has become fashionable to decry *Odette*; to summon up the ghost of Maeterlinck and murmur with Lady Agnes in *A Study of Temperament*, "So decadent." It is tempting to smile at the crimson roses that glisten in the morning sun *like drops of blood*, or at the church that looms *like a ripe apricot against the evening sky*, and to dismiss the whole thing as belated juvenilia. Yet the fact remains that Firbank saw fit to reissue *Odette* in the same year as he brought out *Inclinations*—namely, 1916. Before asking why, it is worth looking for a moment at this "Fairy Tale for Weary People."

ODETTE is "a wee mite" living in a great *château* on the Loire. An aged *curé* tells her the story of Bernadette and the Beautiful Lady whom she saw in the rock, and she decides that she too, like Bernadette, will seek out "the Holy Mary, the Mother of the Lord Seigneur." So, one night she steals down from

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her nursery, creeps through the ancestral hall "with its torn and faded flags that drooped like dead things," slips into the rose garden and there picks an enormous bouquet of the best blooms to offer to the Beautiful Lady. Suddenly the sound of a low groan startles her. She jumps to her feet. "Could it be that the Holy Mother was in pain?" She looks about her but sees no one; instinct compels her to run down the avenue of limes and there, by the river's edge, she discovers a woman with painted cheeks and flaming hair. "What are you doing in your nightgown...? You've begun early, my dear!" "Who are you?" the child insists. "Who are you?" Then far away in the East, with a true theatrical tinting, the day begins to dawn; the innocence of the little girl re-awakens the lost innocence of the woman. "I must go....I am going to try and find—honest work." As they part, the child prays: "Take into Thy protection, dear Mother, this poor woman who has need of Thee, and bring her safely to Thy Beautiful Kingdom in Heaven, for the sake of Our Lord Jesus. Amen."

So it was, in 1916, Ronald Firbank emerged as the author of three books—*Vainglory, Odette,* and *Inclinations.* But why this sandwiching of *Odette*? why this unexpected enthusiasm for an early *pastiche*—an enthusiasm which did not last out the war since by the Armistice he was declaring that *Vainglory* was his first book? Once, this provided a puzzle for collectors of first editions; now, with the complete edition of his works at hand, it still provides a puzzle for critics. I believe that an explanation can be reached by an indirect clue that lies in his reaction to one of the 1916 reviews which met *Inclinations*: "[Mr. Firbank's] new book is pleasant, vivacious and stimulating," wrote *The Scotsman.* "Stimulating to what?" retorted the author. Precisely. That remains as challenging a question now as it did then.

"I once met him ... [and he] told me writing books was by no means easy," he makes one of his characters say. In fact he wrote because he was compelled to, because like all writers subject to this daemon—romantics, fantasists or fictionists (William Plomer's word for Firbank)—he is, though outwardly a comic writer, a much more serious author than it is common to assume. Often friends, even close friends, would notice that he would look shyly away, and similarly there are reflected in his prose a great many sideways glances. A reader must be prepared to heed Polonius' advice and by indirection find direction out. There are singularly few direct statements, and "Beware of a facile Moral" warns one of the characters.

On the final page of *Odette* there is to be found a direct statement which, though not very memorably phrased, provides, I suspect, a key to all his work.

> Then little Odette returned thoughtful to the great grey *château*.... [She] felt somehow changed since she last passed the castle gates. She felt older. For suddenly she realised that Life was not a dream; she realised for the first time that Life was cruel, that Life was sad, that beyond the beautiful garden in which she dwelt, many millions of people were struggling to live, and sometimes in the struggle one failed—like the poor woman by the river bank.

Beyond the garden there is Life with a capital *L*; but behind the garden wall the author is safe in the branches of an apple tree—an ideal position both for disguise and as an observation post. Or, to change the metaphor, perhaps it can be said that at heart Firbank longed to be bold enough to be serious like Maeterlinck, but was forced by the shyness of his nature to play the comedian. And by playing the comedian, which is better than being too shy to play at all, he was able to revel in his love of theatricals and dressing-up, variations of which occur in all his novels. In fact, the novels from *Vainglory* to *Cardinal Pirelli* are made up almost en-

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tirely of dialogue—like plays; and the prose descriptions, in many instances, no more than set the scene or introduce the characters. Why, then, did he fail to achieve his ambition as a serious dramatist?

Claude Harvester was a dramatist—and *Vainglory* provides the answer:

> "Who is . . . talking to that gorgeous thing . . . in the gold trailing skirts,"
> "You mean Claude Harvester. His play the other night was a disaster. Did you see it?"
> "It was delightfully slight, I thought."
> "A disaster!"

A few pages later comes the explanation for its disaster. There was no plot, "no plot exactly." How revealing that last adverb is, since its plot, when revealed, can be summed up in one line: "It's about two women who live all alone." Similar one-sentence synopses can be provided for all the other novels, beginning with *Vainglory*, in which Mrs. Shamefoot wants to see herself immortalised in stained glass while still alive. In *Inclinations*, Miss Collins wants to find true love in the shape of an Italian count, whereas her elderly companion Miss O'Brookomore wants to find it in the shape of Miss Collins. In *Caprice*, Miss Sinquier wants to leave her cathedral close and seek fame on the London boards. In *Valmouth*, a group of centenarians want consolation and look for it in Catholicism and exoticism, and sometimes confuse the two. In *The Princess Zoubaroff* (his one published play), the characters of the opposite sex want to have nothing to do with each other. In *Santal*, Cherif wants to leave his village and seek Allah. In *The Flower Beneath the Foot*, Laura de Nazianzi wants to marry Prince Zoussef, but has to transmute her love into mysticism and is subsequently canonised. In *Prancing Nigger*, Mrs. Mouth wants the glamour of the big city and "a Villa with a watercloset." Finally, in *Concerning the Eccentricities of Cardinal Pirelli*, once again it is a matter of no plot exactly, but just a series of scenes built round ecclesiastical life. Inevitably the final scene is the Cardinal's death, which occurs after he has chased a choir boy "up and down, in and out, round and round 'the Virgin,' over the worn tombed paving, through Saint Joseph . . . and along the raised tribunes of the choristers and the echoing coro. . . ." The last sentence of the book reads as he lies dead beneath the great fane: "Above him stirred the windblown banners in the Nave."

It is a reminder of the "torn and faded flags that drooped like dead things" above Odette. It is a long journey back—over seven hundred

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pages by the printed text, and over twenty years in the author's life; and it is a journey back from sophistication to simplicity, from the self-mockery of Pirelli who, like Harvester, adored disguises but disliked forgoing the military bravura of the skirt, to the romantic portrait of "the wee mite" overshadowed by the great *château* on the Loire. The portraits of Odette and Pirelli are both holy pictures, but whereas the first belongs to the repository art of the 'Nineties, the second belongs to the age of Impressionism. For the chase of the choir-boy Chicklet, the hints of lesbian parishioners, and the suggestion of monastic whippings—these, in *Cardinal Pirelli*, all belong to the tradition of shocking. They appear not so much moral depravities as the essence of 'Nineties naughtiness. They are stimulating to what? To further giggles about hair-shirts, disciplines, and.... A critic is forced to employ the very dots on which Firbank himself so often fell back. To go further would be bad Bad Taste and by Firbank's standards to lapse into bad taste was to bore. It is a large measure of his lasting achievement that he knew the precise boundaries between Good and Bad Taste. Could any but the most bigoted take offence at this brief life of hagiography, with its shades of John Aubrey and William Beckford?

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> One day St. Automona di Meris seeing a young novice yawning suddenly spat into her mouth and that without malice or thought of mischief. Some ninety hours afterwards the said younger novice brought into the world the Blessed St. Elizabeth Bathilde, who by dint of skipping changed her sex at the age of forty and became a man.

It has the same delightful tone of innocent fantasy as when a Sister of the Flaming-Hood Order asks for a copy of *Inclinations* at the local library in Pisuerga and is told that it has already been borrowed. "Maladetta," she exclaims, and instead of the customary dots there follow four Maltese crosses. Or, there is the comedy built out of killing any possible innuendo with the most unexpected and yet direct of statements:

> Perhaps of the many charges brought against the Primate by his traducers, that of making the sign of the cross with his left foot at meals was the most utterly unfounded—looking for a footcushion would have been nearer the truth.

As the author once exclaimed: "Oh the charm and the flavour of the religious world! Where match it for variety and interest!" Occasionally, in the perpetual search for variety and interest, there were moments when boredom set in; when the puns about women and Roman bulls became too obvious, when the suggestions about massage and the off-stage screams of "O-o-o-h?" and "Ouch!!" went too far, and when sentences hovered dangerously over the territory of Bad Taste.[1] "Imagine the world, my friends, had Christ been born a girl." That is a case in point; the love of dressing up has over-stepped the bounds of Good Taste. But since Firbank always hovered above the surface of things, he had no sooner touched the ground of Bad Taste than he had flown away. This may explain why both E. M. Forster and Arthur Waley have suggested that he is as hard to pinion as a butterfly.

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[1] An example of the careful way in which, nearly always, Firbank weighed every innuendo in his writing, was brought to light this year when the page-proofs of *Sorrow in Sunlight* were offered for sale by an English bookseller. (*Prancing Nigger* was first named *Drama in Sunlight*, then *Sorrow in Sunlight*). In Chapter XII, after the words "young boys," he has cut the phrase "bless their little ——". The paragraph in the final text reads (page 93):

> "I've warned the lads," she whispered to Madame Ruiz: "to cut their final figure, on account of the Archbishop. But young boys are so excitable, and I expect they'll forget!"

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THREE YEARS after he had written *Odette d'Antrevernes*, Firbank was received into the Catholic Church at Cambridge. He was twenty-two at the time. Scarcely anything is known about his religious life, though it has been rumoured that, like the Hon. "Eddie" Monteith in *The Flower Beneath the Foot*, he wanted to become a Jesuit. His failure to do so —or rather his failure to gain acceptance by the Order (also rumoured) may account for his later comment to Lord Berners: "The Church of Rome wouldn't have me and so I laugh at her." Firbank was a homosexual, and such men are often condemned to rigours of loneliness far surpassing the austerities of the cell. To them others beckon... but seldom touch, if Claude Harvester may be paraphrased. Meanwhile, his friends married, sometimes their wives did not care for his manner which they found affected, and he grew more and more isolated from them. It is noticeable that his last three books all end on a more tragic—or should I say serious—note.

From the convent walls Laura de Nazianzi in *The Flower Beneath the Foot* has to witness Prince Youssef's marriage to Princess Elsie; in a footnote the reader is told that she was subsequently canonised, and in the first edition (and inexcusably omitted from *The Complete Ronald Firbank*[2]) there are two maxims attributed to her as a Saint which stand as epigraphs to the book: "Some girls are born organically good: I wasn't," and "It was about my eighteenth year that I conquered my *Ego*." As maxims they are in the same vein as the thumbnail sketch of St. Automona di Meris in *Valmouth*, but they strike a profounder note; the comedy of religious fantasy has grown much nearer to the tragi-comedy of self-autobiography.

In the closing pages of *Prancing Nigger* Mimi Mouth joins a religious procession. They sing:

> *Time like an ever-rolling stream,*
> *Bears all its sons away;*
> *They fly forgotten, as a dream*
> *Dies at the opening day.*

Mimi's betrothed has been destroyed in an earthquake—and her sister could not care less. Edna watches the procession with indifference as she relaxes in the warm, secure arms of her own dandy lover. It is suggested that Edna will meet with a Bad End. *Prancing Nigger* has something of the air of a Caribbean religious fiesta about it, and in Charlie's pursuit of butterflies Firbank may be holding up a carnival mask of Death to his own face. For Charlie feels for Mimi. He too has been aware of the passing of things by the earthquake.

[2] Duckworth (1961).

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> "Mizzable sinner, Lord. You heah, Sah. You heah me say dat. Oh! Jesus, Jesus, Jesus," and weeping he threw himself down among a bed of flowers.

As once in Claude Harvester, so now the author finds, in turn, an *alter ego* in Laura de Nazianzi; Charlie Mouth; and His Eminence Cardinal Pirelli. (My typewriter may have been more accurate when it wrote *later ego*). In the salad days of *Vainglory* the author could afford to mock himself; and a few years later, with the security of five books behind him, he could continue to be bolder still: "This Ronald Firbank I can't take to at all.... Was there ever a novel more coarse [than *Valmouth*]?" Even in *Prancing Nigger* he can present himself as: "Ronald Firbank (a dingy lilac of rarity untold)."

Yet sooner or later there would have to be an end to this self-mocking; the blossom on the lilac, no less than the blossom on the apple-tree, would fall. The nails might still be stained with carmine, but there would be old age to be faced, an increase in loneliness, a drying up of the skin, and a final hardening of the arteries. In the end self-mockery could provide no more than another form of disguise—like dressing-up. The centenarians in *Valmouth* cannot expect to reach the age of two hundred, and Firbank himself, who always had a terror of his youthful looks fading, was mercifully released from that terrifying calamity—"my forty-first year." Cardinal Pirelli might be dressed in all the purpleship and pomp of his Church, but at the most it was temporal authority of some ten to twenty years. From the beginning there was the realisation—even in Odette's rose garden—that Life was cruel, that Life was sad. In the interim men laughed at life as best they might, knowing that as some had died of exposure on the Loire others had been choked in Renaissance courts by their own wine. There had to be observed a moderation in all things. Hills could not exist without valleys, nor fairy tales without angels. A last fling would be stimulating to what?

IN ONE SENSE, *Concerning the Eccentricities of Cardinal Pirelli* was a last fling. No previous book had been outwardly more profane and no previous book inwardly so serious. In it there are more direct statements than in any other, even when the shadows of such statements fall fleetingly across the page—like those of a passing butterfly or angel. "Men ... the eternal hunters, novelty seekers, insatiable beings"; "Men with their selfishness, fickleness and lies"; "Women with their prettiness, vanity and...." The famous dots; the swerving away. The longest direct passage is the most strange in the whole book, indeed in the whole body of his work. The Primate has fled the capital to a deserted monastery:

> The forsaken splendour of the vast closed cloisters seemed almost to augur the waning of a cult. Likewise the decline of Apollo, Diana, Isis, with the gradual downfall of their temples, had been heralded, in past times, by the dispersal of their priests. It looked as though Mother Church, like Venus or Diana, was making way in due turn for the beliefs that should follow: "and we shall begin with intolerance, martyrdom and converts," the Cardinal ruminated, pausing before the ancient fresco depicting the eleven thousand virgins, or as many as there was room for.

Firbank may not have been able to keep a smile from breaking across his face at the idea of "the eleven thousand virgins," but the earlier sentiments are certainly stimulating. But to what? Pirelli is a Renaissance figure and Clemenza is a Renaissance cathedral. Has, then, the Church of Rome a need in every age to return to the catacombs to be cleansed of its pomps? Is this what he is saying? History would seem to endorse it. So there remains the paradox that the last book which in a true Renaissance style was the most bawdy remains in a religious sense the most profound. Had its author lived to see its publication there might have been talk of banning it. As it was the Home Secretary let it appear unquestioned. The printing was comparatively modest (Grant Richards had reprinted none of the previous novels), and it seemed unlikely to the Home Office that they would be worried in this quarter again. In 1926 there were more important matters to be considered; other authors were still alive and kicking. In the same year as *Vainglory* had been published *The Rainbow* had come out and there had been trouble with the police. A vigilant eye must be kept for *The Plumed Serpent*, already announced on another publisher's list.

IN HIS LIFETIME Ronald Firbank created a legend and when he died there were those who would not believe the news. The circumstances of his burial seemed so extraordinary. At first buried in the company of Keats and Shelley in the English cemetery in Rome he was later exhumed and re-interred in a Catholic cemetery in the same city. In September 1929 Arnold Bennett dismissed his achievement as that of "an elegant weakling" in *The Evening*

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Standard. A month later Evelyn Waugh replied with a short enthusiastic appreciation in *Life and Letters*. In the following year Ifan Kyrle Fletcher, with postscripts by Vyvyan Holland, Augustus John, Lord Berners and Sir Osbert Sitwell, brought out a distinguished full-length *Memoir*.

And so the cult grew. The Rainbow edition that had brought forth Bennett's disapproval and won Waugh's approval was reprinted in 1940 for a new generation to whom (as Cyril Connolly pointed out at the time) Firbank was one of the most neglected names. In 1949 there appeared the first of two omnibus editions of five and three novels, and in 1952, thirty-two years after it had been originally written, *The Princess Zoubaroff* was given its first production at the Watergate Theatre, London. Subsequently *Valmouth*, borrowing Cardinal Pirelli for its last act, was turned into a musical in London and New York. Some of his novels have been issued as paper-backs and *The Complete Ronald Firbank* has appeared in one volume.

Yet if Claude Harvester's works are mentioned in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Firbank's are not; nor are they mentioned in the *Concise Cambridge History of Literature*. "Niggerling" is his word for a little black "sambo"; it is not given in *The English Oxford Dictionary*. Every new reading brings up delights and fresh questions. What did he learn from Shaw? Did Shaw's *Doctor's Dilemma* inspire in him the courage to use his own name in his own novels: "I don't believe in morality. I'm a disciple of Bernard Shaw"? Did the young Noel Coward read *Inclinations*: "I love Finsbury Circus for its doves. . . . I adore the Aspens in Cadogan Square"? When Firbank decided to leave out all that bored him, was he conscious of Congreve's *Incognita*: "When I digress I am at that time writing to please myself; when I continue the thread of my story, I write to please the Reader"? Was it conscious design that one year he rented the palace at Cintra in which Beckford had once lived?

My eye has been caught by an obsession with roses. Not a book did he write in which they are not mentioned. In his juvenilia there are poems about "The Wind and the Roses," and in his first published sketch, *A Study of Temperament*, there occurs the remark: "I don't know which looked the redder, the women or the roses." In *Odette*, there are crimson roses "like drops of crimson blood"; in *The Artificial Princess*, there are wild roses, pink roses, tinsel roses, light-green roses, Jericho roses and stone-rosettes; in *Vainglory*, there are Christmas roses, rambler roses and red roses—a Faun is crowned with roses, and the silver chimes of the cathe-

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dral clock are compared to the petals falling from a rose; in *Inclinations*, there are black Scotch roses, sugar-crystal roses and mauve rosettes; in *Caprice*, the hedges are alive with roses; in *Valmouth*, Lady Parvula de Panzoust wears a hat of rose-pink feathers, and Lady Lucy's blood is described as "nothing but rose-water"; in *The Flower Beneath the Foot*, the ladies of the Court wear skirts ruched with rose-buds and the clouds above are "like knots of pink roses"; in *Prancing Nigger*, Cuna-Cuna is "full of charming roses," Costa-Rica roses and fresh rosettes—and every evening a rosy dusk glimmers against the rosy mountains; in *Cardinal Pirelli*, the poetess Diana Beira Baixa clasps "a large bouquet of American Beauty-roses" to her bosom, while the Primate himself sighs at the sprawling of Oriental literature and wishes that it would "concentrate its roses"; and in *The New Rythum*, his last, unfinished novel, there occurs a scene where Mrs. Rose-merchant reads about New York's latest "vice" in which "Society Women [are] birched with roses," the widow of the defunct Senator Mandarin declaring her allegiance for branches of *Gloire de Dijon*, whereas Mrs. Culling Brown insists that Dorothy Perkins are best.

Some might seize the opportunity for a word-count, remembering his affection for the colour *mauve* and the *henna* rinse indulged in by so many of his characters. Nothing could be more deadly with such a talent. Roses are their own parable. Life is sad, the blooms must fall. Life is cruel, there are thorns.

Catholic Controversies

By Brian Wicker

IN DECEMBER 1966 Charles Davis, a leading theologian of the Roman Catholic Church in Britain, and Cardinal Heenan's personal expert at the Vatican Council, publicly renounced his priesthood, left the Church and shortly afterwards got married. The event had wide repercussions, the most notable of which was "the McCabe affair" (now written up in a book of that title[1]). Herbert McCabe, a prominent Dominican, wrote an editorial in *New Blackfriars* (February 1967) which attempted to show that Davis' action, though understandable, was misguided. He insisted that, despite its manifest faults, the Roman Church still legitimately represented Christian truth. For emphasising the faults in a particularly blunt and forceful way, McCabe was sacked from his post and temporarily suspended from his priestly functions.

Since then much else has happened. Davis has produced his own account of the reasons for leaving, *A Question of Conscience*.[2] And, early this year, a book was published in which Cardinal Heenan and Rosemary Haughton collaborated in reflecting upon these events and their implication for the Church.[3] Meanwhile, Catholics from overseas have contributed to the ferment. Leslie Dewart, a Canadian philosopher, in *The Future of Belief*,[4] has challenged the whole basis of traditional Catholic philosophy and tried to produce a new prolegomena to the faith in which Marx and Freud replace Aristotle and Aquinas. Hans Kung, a theologian from Tübingen well known in England for his *Council and Reunion*,[5] published his scholarly but potentially revolutionary book *The Church*[6] here in January 1968. From a very different standpoint, Jacques Maritain, doyen of the neo-Thomist revival, published early in 1968 his most personal manifesto, *The Peasant of the Garonne*,[7] in which he expresses his fear that the Church of the post-conciliar era is in mortal danger of self-betrayal by "kneeling before the world." Finally, the Left-wing socialist group round the Catholic periodical *Slant* has held its first major symposium and will be publishing its findings in the autumn under the title *From Culture to Revolution*.[8]

Clearly, everybody would agree that today is a moment of crisis for Christianity; but there

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[1] *The McCabe Affair*. By SIMON CLEMENTS and MONICA LAWLOR. Sheed and Ward, 15s.

[2] *A Question of Conscience*. By CHARLES DAVIS. Hodder & Stoughton, 30s.

[3] *Dialogue: The State of the Church Today*. By ROSEMARY HAUGHTON and CARDINAL HEENAN. Geoffrey Chapman, 21s.

[4] *The Future of Belief*. By LESLIE DEWART. Burns and Oates, 30s.

[5] *Council and Reunion*. By HANS KUNG. Sheed and Ward, 1961.

[6] *The Church*. By HANS KUNG. Burns and Oates, 84s.

[7] *The Peasant of the Garonne*. By JACQUES MARITAIN. Geoffrey Chapman, 42s.

[8] *From Culture to Revolution* (edited by Terry Eagleton and Brian Wicker) will be published by Sheed and Ward in the Autumn of 1968.

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is no agreement about how to define it. When one reflects on this fact, the reason becomes clear: it is because the problem of definition *is* the crisis. All the fashionable diagnoses—a crisis of obedience (Cardinal Heenan), a crisis of credibility (Charles Davis), a crisis of political commitment (*Slant*)—boil down to the question: What is Christianity? What is the Church for? No discussion that assumes we have a ready-made answer adequate to these questions begins to measure up to the problem.

This conclusion is forced upon anyone who reads *Dialogue: The State of the Church Today* by Cardinal Heenan and Rosemary Haughton. The book comes out of "a common anxiety about the future of the Church in England, in particular about the lack of understanding between members of the laity and the hierarchy." If the book is not epoch-making, as it might have been, this is not because either author lacks sympathy, honesty, or readiness to accept criticism. It is because their anxiety is misplaced. They both assume that, for Christians, the state of the Church is a matter of overwhelming importance. This seems to me to be a mistake. The state of the Church should be of only secondary concern to Christians. As a topic of burning interest it is best left to humanists and agnostics. What matters primarily to Christians is the state of the world.

In saying this I do not want to gloss over the over-riding question of the *truth* of what the Church teaches. Curiously enough, it seems that Charles Davis and Cardinal Heenan are in complete agreement that this is the crucial question, though they differ radically about the answer. But the problem is not so simple as they would have us believe. Davis' theological justification for remaining a Christian outside all the recognised traditions is unconvincing, and the Cardinal's recent pleas for a more active intervention of "authority" in controversial matters of faith does not touch the root of the problem. Authority in teaching is inseparable from authoritativeness: and it is the latter quality that many people feel the Church lacks today. Few bishops contribute actively to theological debate; and the record of inept interventions from Galileo onwards remains vividly in the memory. The recovery of authoritativeness—the ability to speak to the situation as it really is—requires a quite unequivocal dedication to the pursuit of truth wherever it leads and a readiness for complete exposure to contemporary reality however inconvenient. It has to precede any recovery of persistent intervention by "authority" in matters of personal belief. There are no shortcuts. However urgent the need, authoritativeness cannot be manufactured to order.

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In agreeing with Charles Davis and Cardinal Heenan that truth is an over-riding concern I am not suggesting for a moment that Christians can safely ignore the faults and scandals of the Church. And for those, like Charles Davis, whose whole existence has been bound up with ecclesiastical institutions, these scandals may well seem personally and decisively significant. But to suppose that putting such things right is the first Christian priority, and that once they are removed the Church will be able to get on with its proper task, is a serious error, for two reasons. Firstly, because the health of the Church, like the health of the body, is not something it is healthy to be preoccupied with. And secondly, because until one knows what the Church is for, in the modern world, it is impossible to decide what its faults are. If we believe the Church is a community that exists for its own sake—complete in itself, replete with its own God-given life, and standing in no need of justification but rather standing in judgment over all other kinds of community—then it may well be that many of the radical changes now being demanded are forms of self-betrayal. Many of the old rules and regulations, habits and attitudes *were* more creative of "community-feeling" than the "open" forms advocated by progressives today. There is something rootless and suburban about the new "paperback" theology. Though post-renaissance piety was individualistic, almost everything else about the pre-conciliar Church encouraged herd-instincts: and if keeping the Church together in its own ghetto is the first priority then the conservatives are right.

But if the Church is not a community for itself, but is rather a mission to the world, designed to look outwards rather than inwards; if its very life depends upon its readiness to lose itself for the sake of the world around it; if it stands under divine judgment rather than having sovereign power to mete out divine judgment to others, then of course the things conservatives see as virtues will be vices. And if the answer to the problem of the Church is that it partakes of both these concepts, the question remains as to which emphasis should take priority just now. Isn't suburbia, with all its problems, the world of the future where theology has got to live?

In his part of the book just referred to, Cardinal Heenan appears to think the answer to the problem of the Church is so obvious that the question does not even have to be raised. Catholics, he assumes, know what the Church is for—that is their special privilege, their special kind of certitude. This is why he can speak of the "excessive demythologisation associated with the Protestant theologian Bultmann" without further explanation of what he means, and can insist that "we have to accept the church as Christ founded it" (*i.e.*, as "hierarchical, and indeed, with due respect for the notion of collegiality, monarchical") without defining what "due respect" means and without reference to the current theological discussions (well summarised by Kung) about whether we can say, *tout court*, that Christ, in his earthly life, founded the Church as we know it at all. What *is* clear, as Kung shows, is that Christ's mission was to preach the reign of God that had already come with his own teaching. The Church, as an organisation for the continuance of this mission, came definitely into existence only after the resurrection. For this reason there is a permanent tension between the institution of the Church in history and the wholly gratuitous reign of God, of which the Church is the "anticipatory sign" but not the substantial embodiment. There is no continuity between the Church and the reign of God in its final consummation. To think of the Church as a permanent, monarchically centred, self-subsistent community in this world, however "spiritual" its régime, is to endanger the gratuitousness of God's kingdom. Hence the building up of the Church cannot be simply identified with the preaching of God's reign, and when it becomes an end in itself such building-up can even be a positive hindrance to that mission.

This is why the state of the Church is only of secondary concern to the Christian. No doubt it is true that the Church needs to be vernacularised, decentralised, democratised, demythologised: but this is only a negative clearing of the decks. (We may note here, as a most significant symbol, that it was precisely the clarification of ecclesiastical authority, by the recent synod of bishops, which led Cardinal Leger to resign all his ecclesiastical preferments and return to working as an ordinary missionary among the "wretched of the earth" in Africa.) Cardinal Heenan is right, then, to question some of the priorities that progressives make. But it is not enough to suppose that making use of the existing structures and organisations is the answer. For many of these organisations are plagued by the very introversion and narcissism that lies at the root of the crisis. As Charles Davis rightly insists, the health of the Church can only be a by-product of its total and self-forgetful dedication to the problems of the world. The question is not how to define ecclesiastical authority, but what to exercise it on. What are the priorities of the world here and now? What choices face the Church as it tries to rise to the occasion? If it cannot avoid conflict and commitment, where

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does its primary duty lie in the face of contemporary facts?

IF THE CHURCH is to turn away from preoccupation with its own state of health, it must first recognise (as Cardinal Heenan does) that few of its problems are peculiar to the Church as such. They are common to society at large. A crisis of authority is endemic to all forms of contemporary society, of every political complexion and at every level. Distrust and disillusionment about established modes of change and the established distribution of power are evident everywhere. An uncritical avant-gardism is a symptom of life in every sphere where youth and energy are in abundance. The crisis of the Church is only an aspect of the crisis of the world; the Church flatters itself if it thinks it has a special problem here. What needs to be recognised, however, is that it is just when the Church finds itself facing a crisis that goes beyond itself that its internal problems begin to solve themselves. The dramatic advances in Holland did not begin with the deliberate cultivation of better ecclesiastical manners, but originated in the desperate need to join forces against the Nazi occupation. Beside that need, the preoccupations of theologians and lawyers paled into insignificance. The same is becoming more obvious every day in America, where the whole social fabric is being put to the test. Under such stresses Christian disunity is a luxury that cannot be afforded.

But it is a mistake to think that such critical choices simply present themselves out of the blue. Issues are *made*, by people. History is a dialectic between objective facts and humanly chosen priorities. Hence, if (as Charles Davis has put it) the "Christian Church is intended as a dynamic force at the service of mankind, an *avant-garde* leading its true advance towards a unity grounded upon God through Christ," its first need is to be able to discern, according to Christian criteria, the right priorities here and now. From the vast complex of problems that face mankind at any moment, the Church has to pick out the growing points, the critical weaknesses, the faults in the strata of present experience through which the future is breaking out. The real trouble with the Church today is that it is not geared to this task. Instead of its theology being properly understood as part of the *avant-garde* of human thought, as creative of the future, it is still taken that the theologian's task, and that of the bishop as teacher of the community, is essentially preservative, defensive, protective, guarding the deposit from error or contamination. "Solid theology" (as

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Cardinal Heenan calls it) means a study rooted in the tradition of the past, especially in the great masters of patristic and medieval times. Obviously this tradition must not be lost. But this does not imply that a theology which is consciously "modern" and attempts to provide a prophetic insight into the meaning of contemporary life, should automatically be thought superficial, rootless, blown hither and thither on the winds of intellectual fashion. It is undeniable that there is a risk to be run in a creative (as disinct from a preservative) theology. But the risk of not attempting it is far greater.

No revolution can be accomplished without a body of theory: and the mission of the Church cannot succeed without a theology for its times. The trouble with modern theology in the Roman Catholic Church is not (as Jacques Maritain and Malcolm Muggeridge both seem to think) that it is too much "with it," too much in league with the spirit of the world, but that it is not modern enough. The "solid" professional Catholic theologians are still engaged in assimilating the *avant-garde* of yesterday—Barth and Bultmann, Tillich and even Kierkegaard. It is thought a great advance that seminary studies should now include the study of Marx and Freud, Lawrence and Camus—established figures of the recent past whose work should surely be on the shelves of any "general reader." Similarly, it is thought daring to hold discussions with such respected pillars of the English establishment as the British Humanist Association and the Communist Party. Surely the Church must not just be up-to-date: it must be "ahead of the game," redeeming the times by virtue of its grasp of what is to come. It can preserve itself only by a perpetual self-transcendence, a permanent gift of prophecy.

YET IT REMAINS TRUE that the future of the Church depends ultimately upon the choices that ordinary people make in their daily lives. Cardinal Heenan is right to see the crucial test of the Church in the way its teaching and its pastoral work operate at the ordinary grass-roots level. But even at this level there are, at the present time, fundamental political and moral choices to be faced. Multifarious though the daily problems of living are, and genuine though the dedication is of most clergy to their jobs, from now on what will most searchingly probe and test the Church's faith and love are the great political world-issues: mass poverty and racism, revolution and oppression in the third world, the murderous application of science to warfare and of the arts to the stimulation of greed and envy. The Church's life, and even that of mankind itself, depends on the manner in which its members in the Christian West choose to commit themselves on these issues as their over-riding concern, and prepare themselves to follow Christianity wherever it leads them in that commitment. And this in turn depends on how the "authority" of the Church, which must inevitably influence these choices in a decisive way, is brought into action and on which side it finally puts its weight.

Groovy Lupin

THE EDITORS of *Penguin Modern Classics* have made some eccentric choices, and even *The Diary of a Nobody*,[1] first published in 1892, can scarcely be called "modern." It is, however, undoubtedly a minor masterpiece, though written by two brothers, George and Weedon Grossmith, who were actor and artist rather than chiefly authors. It also remains a key book for understanding the English lower middle classes, by whom we are increasingly ruled; and a study which, except in its outer social forms, has dated extraordinarily little. All the more so as one may discover, when re-reading it, that in young Lupin Pooter, the brothers have almost invented the English teenager some sixty years before he actually appeared on the scene a decade or so ago.

The story, as will be recalled, evokes the daily lives of Charles and Caroline Pooter, and their one child Willie Lupin, at their home, The Laurels, Brickfield Terrace, Holloway, and in other suburban settings or at the City, where Mr. Pooter is a clerk in the firm of Mr. Perkupp. The whole art of its satire consists in describing the inspired banality of the family's daily doings, so that a chain of events that rarely rises above the ordinary takes on, for Mr. Pooter (who is the supposed diarist), a highly dramatic significance. And though Mr. Pooter has scarcely in his head anything that could be called an idea, the authors contrive, with consummate effect, to explain to us the beliefs and prejudices of an English petty bourgeois of the day. Yet while Mr. Pooter and his family would, in reality, be rather dreadful—or, at any rate, crashingly dull—the Grossmiths do most skilfully manage to engage our sympathies for them, and even to make us see that, despite

[1] *The Diary of a Nobody*. By GEORGE and WEEDON GROSSMITH. Penguin Modern Classics, 3s. Collins, 9s. Everyman, 12s. 6d.

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their utter conventionality, they are, as human beings, somehow admirable . . . *good* people, in fact, however much we may be inclined to mock or sneer at them. The secret of this, I think, is that Mr. Pooter himself, though an appalling petty snob, and conformist to every dead Victorian convention, is made such as to appear innocent, even pure. And in the end, his love for his (slightly less dim) wife Carrie, and for his wayward son Lupin who puzzles him so much, is made to seem touching and almost —if one can use such a word of Mr. Pooter— heroic. The fact of the matter probably is that inside all of us—however clever and imaginative we may think we are—there is a bit of Charlie Pooter himself, *l'homme moyen non-sensuel* who still proliferates in the English social scene.

But Lupin is another matter: right from the start he revolts against the whole ethos of Brickfield Terrace, and finally breaks away from it altogether. His rows with his father—though decorously muted in Mr. Pooter's case—are indeed the classic battle of the generations, with this difference that many of the things Lupin does and says to exasperate his father, and rebel against him, seem more of 1968 than 1892. So much so that whereas I used to think that Mr. Graham Greene, in his Pinkie of *Brighton Rock*, invented the literary teen-ager, I now believe the Grosssmiths had already done so long before.

The *Diary* is admirably illustrated by Weedon Grossmith (whose drawings are reproduced in the Penguin edition), and on our first sight of Lupin, a quarter way through the book, we see portrayed what is manifestly a hip kid of his period. This difference of dress of the generations is indeed emphasised throughout, as in the absurd straw helmet Mr. Pooter wears with his frock coat and bell-bottomed trousers when on holiday at Broadstairs, contrasted with the "bright blue box-coat that seemed miles too large for him" that Lupin insists on having to drive his hired pony trap. Lupin's hippy speech —highly confusing to poor Pooter—is also constantly insisted on. "I have long since given up trying to understand Lupin's slang, or asking him to explain it," he says, in the same injured tones that parents use of teen-age talk today.

INDEED, FROM HIS FIRST appearance, Lupin strikes the note of rebellion not only against his father, but lower-middle-class society: he has left his safe job at the bank at Oldham ("If you want to know the good old truth, I've got the chuck"), and is not much interested in his father's cherished dream of his son's joining him as a clerk in Mr. Perkupp's stuffy office. Instead, Lupin goes to work for a stockbroker,

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and is soon speculating successfully, in a manner that makes his father fear he "does not seem over-scrupulous in his dealings." He studies the *Financial News* "as if he had been a born capitalist"; and on the day Mr. Pooter proudly announces his promotion, after years of faithful service with Mr. Perkupp, to the lofty post of Head Clerk at £100 a year extra, Lupin calmly announces he has made £200 that day by gambling. "Look here, Guv," says Lupin to his disconcerted father, "excuse me saying so, but you're a bit out of date. It does not pay nowadays, fiddling about with small things." And later, of the revered Mr. Perkupp, "The stagnant dummies have been standing still for years, and now are moving back. I want to get *on*." Lupin prefers to associate with the wealthy Mr. Murray Posh, who "could buy up Perkupp's firm over his head at any moment with ready cash." This greatly disturbs Mr. Pooter, who even admits "I was inclined to indulge in the radical thought that money was *not* properly divided."

As for the party games that Pooter *père* and *mère* like so much—the Victorian equivalent, one may feel, of watching television—Lupin is profoundly contemptuous of them. "Pardon me," he says on one occasion, "this sort of thing is too fast for me. I shall go and enjoy a quiet game of marbles in the back-garden." Instead of doing this, however, he goes to the music halls and, like a lad joining a pop group today, signs on with the youthful "Holloway Comedians" whose fellow-members worry Pooter enormously. Lupin smokes too much ("which he indulges in violently," his Pa complains), and is always getting home late (Pooter regrets his wife has given him his own latch-key), usually—one gathers, reading between the lines—rather drunk. Yet to Pooter's exasperation Carrie, his wife, tends to side with Lupin: "Remember, you were young once yourself," she admonishes him.

What of the family's sex life? The Pooters themselves don't appear to have any (or any more, since they *have* produced a son), but Lupin is a very gay dog indeed. He is twice engaged, both times to flashy women older than himself: first to Daisy Mutlar ("My heart quite sank. She is a big young woman....") and then, when Daisy deserts him for Murray Posh, to Posh's rich sister, "Lillie Girl" ("She was very tall, rather plain, and I thought she was a little painted round the eyes. I hope I am wrong; but she had such fair hair, and yet her eyebrows were black."). Since the *Diary* originally appeared in *Punch*, the Grossmiths are fairly reticent as to whether Lupin "has it off" with either of these girls—though reading once again between the lines, it seems likely he did. And what is more, when Posh marries Daisy, and Lupin is courting Lillie Girl (yet still flirting with Daisy), it seems hinted that they will all set up what amounts to a *ménage à quatre*. When Lupin, enriched, moves finally to Bayswater ("I am not going to rot away my life in the suburbs"), and takes a luxury flat there, Pooter is shocked, at Lupin's first dinner party, by his attitude to the two women. ("I must say in my simple mind the familiar way in which Mrs. Posh and Lupin addressed each other is reprehensible." As for Miss Posh, or "Lillie Girl," "I did not like the way she kept giggling and giving Lupin smacks and pinching him.")

Lupin, indeed, is completely transformed throughout the book—even dropping entirely his first name "Willie" which his Pa prefers. Nor is it only with his son that Pooter is constantly at odds—there is "young Pitt," the office demon who taunts him, the greengrocer's boy who maddens him by handing unwrapped coals in the dark, and the grocer's boy who picks paint blisters off the side door of The Laurels. But just as the elderly, faced with youth "dropping out" today, take consolation in platitudes and each other's company, so has Pooter his cronies Cummings and Gowing to console him. Gowing says he "liked Master Lupin very well, but he occasionally suffered from what he could not help—youth." However, Pooter partly consoles himself by reflecting "that an old and a young horse can't pull together in the same cart."

All this adds up, I think, to a portrait of a father-son relationship that seems very much of our own day. Other curious echoes, or rather foretastes, of our own age come up in the *Diary* too—there is a surprising joke about the colour question, and a mildly anti-American episode ("one man, seated in the cart, and looking like an American, commenced singing some vulgar nonsense...," etc.). By contrast, Pooter is much impressed by Mr. Hardfur Huttle (actually based on Frank Harris) who is "a very clever writer for the American papers," and who startles Pooter with remarks "which from other people would seem quite alarming." Indeed, bewildered by his son's independence of mind and behaviour, and bedazzled by Hardfur Huttle's "marvellously intellectual" ideas, Pooter finally reflects on Lupin thus:

> Lupin *does* resemble Mr. Huttle in some ways. Lupin, like Mr. Huttle, has original and sometimes wonderful ideas; but it is those ideas that are so dangerous. They make men extremely rich or extremely poor. They make or break men. I always feel people are happier who live a simple

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unsophisticated life. I believe *I* am happy because I am not ambitious.

Undoubtedly Lupin, like his modern young successors, would agree with Mr. Pooter's diagnosis of himself and, by implication, of the conservative society of which Pooter was a survival, and which some of the young rejected then, as almost all of them do today.

Colin MacInnes

Encyclopaedias: Theory and Practice

By Maurice Cranston

ENCYCLOPAEDIAS are delightful—though expensive—to possess, to dip into and to look things up in. But there must be very few people who read them from beginning to end. Aldous Huxley, in one of his essays, speaks of taking encyclopaedias with him in crates when he travelled abroad, and doubtless he, at any rate, read them from cover to cover. Living in voluntary exile hundreds or thousands of miles from the London Library, on the Mediterranean or in the Mojave Desert, he must often have yearned for something to read; he must also have needed material for his books, in which snippets of diverse and recondite information were used to provide a highbrow glaze. But, alas, Aldous Huxley is not to be counted a very good writer, and his air of the knowing *touche-à-tout* must surely infuriate the earnest young people of the present generation, should they ever chance to read him.

Then there is another public: of those who buy encyclopaedias and never open them. I was recently told by an official of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* company that there is a ready market for their latest editions among rich bourgeois Swedes and Italians who can hardly read a word of English. Is a set of bright new encyclopaedias, in the costliest of available bindings, a status symbol on the office shelves, or is it one of those cultural objects that successful commercial men employ as talismans to protect their souls?

For most of us, encyclopaedias are books of reference; and any inclination to go on reading, once one has found out what one is after, is quickly snuffed by two countervailing "disincentives": first, the volumes are always too heavy, and secondly the alphabetical system of arrangement puts together subjects of no rational congruity: having read about *Cricket* no one wants to go on reading about *Crime*; and a man who has just read the article on the *Hearse* is in no mood to go on reading about the *Heart*.

Encyclopaedias have not always been arranged alphabetically. In a short history of encyclopaedias,[1] Mr. Robert Collison has traced the origin of the encyclopaedia back to Speusippos, who died about 338 B.C. All the earlier models were designed logically rather than alphabetically. But it was not until encyclopaedias were laid out from *A* to *Z* that they really became popular, and that happened in the eighteenth century, with the appearance of *Chambers' Encyclopaedia, Diderot's Encyclopédie*, and the Brockhaus *Real-Encyclopädie*. Even so, when Samuel Taylor Coleridge was invited in 1817 to edit a new encyclopaedia, he was determined to arrange it on rational principles: "To call a huge unconnected miscellany of the *omne scibile*, in an arrangement determined by the accident of initial letters, an encyclopaedia, is the impudent ignorance of your Presbyterian bookmakers," he protested in a letter to Robert Southey. In the event, Coleridge's health (or, more exactly, his opium addiction) prevented his editing the projected encyclopaedia, but his memorandum expounding the method on which he proposed to design it is still worth reading as a treatise on scientific method. But no modern editor would dream of using it. The system is simply not workable. The arrangement of an encyclopaedia is evidently one of those cases, not altogether rare, where the dictates of reason and of practicality conflict.

THE MOST IMPORTANT encyclopaedia in history was surely Diderot's *Encyclopédie*. Diderot had lofty ambitions as a dramatist and hoped to be remembered for his plays; but he was a born editor, with courage enough to go to prison for his deeds and skill enough to make his cleverest contemporaries write for him. But the *Encyclopédie* is less a book of reference than a manifesto of liberal empiricism, and one which helped

[1] *Encyclopaedias: Their History Throughout the Ages*. By ROBERT COLLISON. Hafner, 50s.

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to revolutionise the world. It was inspired by the wild dream of Francis Bacon of encompassing all knowledge within a single work; and although Diderot had the further aim of insinuating as much atheism as the censorship would tolerate, his achievement in producing a 35-volume work in a hostile environment seems almost miraculous.

At a more pedestrian level, the level indeed of Coleridge's "Presbyterian bookmakers," is the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, as it was when it first appeared in 1771. The name was meant to veil the fact that it was an entirely Scotch enterprise, edited by William Smellie and published by Andrew Bell and Colin MacFarquhar. A facsimile of this first edition has recently been brought out by the present (American) *E.B.* company.[2] Bibliophiles will not like it, for it has about it a slightly repellent air of plastic bogusness, with mock foxing and stains on the paper and a mock hide binding, but at least it makes accessible a work which had long been unobtainable.

William Smellie, the first editor, was only 28, and he is reputed to have written most of the text himself. What gives the work its chief claim to enduring interest, however, is its wealth of illustrations, all engraved in copper plate by one of the two publishers, Andrew Bell, a dwarf of notorious ugliness and charm. His engravings for the long article on *Midwifery*, depicting the child within the womb or emerging from it, are masterly (predictably they led to this edition being branded as "indecent" in the nineteenth century); there are also some beautiful illustrations of ships and machines. The emphasis of this encyclopaedia is on crafts rather than on humanistic subjects or pure thought. Smellie's (?) article on *Metaphysics* is lamentable, especially considering that it appeared a year after Kant's *De Mundi Sensibilis*.

THE MOST IMPRESSIVE encyclopaedia of pure thought in the English language is a recent one: the eight-volume *Encyclopaedia of Philosophy* edited in New York by Professor Paul Edwards.[3] Edwards himself is a distinguished and highly sophisticated philosopher, who has specialised in the logical aspect of ethics, and who has also written some more popular controversial pieces for freethinking

[2] *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. First Edition Replica. Three Volumes, £30.

[3] *The Encyclopaedia of Philosophy*. Edited by PAUL EDWARDS. Collier-Macmillan, New York and London, 8 volumes, £117, $495.

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journals, which place him squarely in the tradition of Diderot. Not that Edwards can be accused of producing another polemical encyclopaedia. He is far too scrupulous. He discusses the problem of bias in his introductory essay:

> No matter how fair and equitable an editor may try to be, his personal views and commitments are bound to affect the organisation of the work, the space allotted to the different subjects, and the criteria employed in judging the quality of the contributions. If this kind of bias cannot be eliminated, its influence can at least be restricted, and it also can and should be openly acknowledged....
>
> It would, nevertheless, be idle to pretend that this *Encyclopaedia* is free from bias and that my own ideological commitments have not significantly influenced its content. Like the majority of my closest advisers, I have been raised in the empirical and analytic tradition of Anglo-Saxon philosophy. There can be no doubt that if the *Encyclopaedia* had been edited by a follower of Hegel or by a phenomenologist, assuming him to be fair and equitable, it would have looked very different.

No editor could be more honest. And indeed Edwards gives a very generous showing both to the Idealists and to the phenomenologists. The articles by H. B. Acton on *Hegel* and *Bosanquet*, for example, could not be bettered; and the articles on *Husserl*, *Brentano*, *Scheler* and *Sartre* reveal a bias only in the direction of sympathy. Moreover space has been found not only for Hegel and the leading Hegelians, but for the kind of Neo-Hegelian that Edwards must find especially distasteful, such as the Italian fascists Giovanni Gentile and Armando Carlini. And while Edwards himself contributes the articles on *Atheism* and on *Common consent arguments for the existence of God*, he publishes other pieces on religious problems by authors sympathetic to religion, such as H. D. Lewis, Ninian Smart, Leo Sweeney, Mircea Eliade and John E. Smith. In fact, "the philosophy of religion" as a whole receives very full and judicious treatment.

The British contribution to Edward's *Encyclopaedia* is remarkable, not only for quantity, but for quality. Ryle, Koestler, MacIntyre, Peters, Hart, Wollheim, Prior, Hepburn, Flew and Walsh as well as Acton are among those who have written substantial articles. There is very little from Americans of comparable standing. Nothing at all from Carnap, Quine, Stevenson, McKeon, Rawls, Nazarowitz or Goodman, and only one piece each from Blanshard, Hempel and Hospers. Conceivably eminent Americans feel they cannot afford to write for two cents a word; yet the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* which is notably parsimonious has seldom lacked

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American contributors. Edwards leans on British authors for many of his French as well as his general articles: Thomas Gilbey does *Abelard*, Ronald Grimsley *Rousseau*, Wolfe Mays *Piaget*, Colin Smith *Bachelard, Mounier, Lalande* and *Jankelevitch*. But one must not belittle the American contribution, especially from those scholars who have specialised in the history of ideas rather than pure philosophy. George Boas has written a score of excellent articles; and there are important pieces by Max Black, Crane Brinton, William P. Alston, George L. Kline, Richard H. Popkin, and Morris Weitz.

Some of the entries in this encylopaedia are longish monographs, containing as much material as is found in many books; and every entry has at the end a fairly extensive bibliography. It is a pity such encyclopaedias have to cost so much money, for one could not easily find anything better to press upon a student of philosophy. It is marvellously free of dead wood; it is up-to-date, authoritative and surprisingly readable. One feels that if only Aldous Huxley had been able to pack *this* encyclopaedia for his travels, he might perhaps have written better books.

Return

The train shot through the dark.
Hedges leapt across the window-pane.
Trees belled in foliage were stranded,
Inarticulate with rain.
A blur of lighted farm implied
The evacuated countryside.

I am appalled by its emptiness.
Every valley glows with pain
As we run like a current through;
Then the memories darken again.
In this Irish past I dwell
Like sound implicit in a bell.

The train curves round a river,
And how tenderly its gouts of steam
Contemplate the nodding moon
The waters from the clouds redeem.
Two hours from Belfast.
I am snared in my past.

Crusts of light lie pulsing
Diamanté with the rain
At the track's end. Amazing!
I am in Derry once again.
Once more I turn to greet
Ground that flees from my feet.

Seamus Deane

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The Uses and Abuses of Economics

By M. M. Postan

MY ARTICLE in the January issue of ENCOUNTER obviously invited a lively and even an angry come-back. To have given voice to well-concealed doubts about a group of academic neighbours is provocative enough; but what must have aggravated the provocation is that the group's own view of itself happens to be highly neurotic. It is well known for its high opinion of its intellectual status, but is at the same time suspected of a conspiratorial, augur-like, awareness of its inadequacies. I was therefore prepared for the response to be suitably aggressive. In the event it has turned out to be pleasantly disappointing. With the exception of a characteristically brash article in the *New Statesman*, most published comments and private reactions, both by letter and by word of mouth, have been more moderate and understanding than I had the right to expect.

Indeed some of the responses to my articles have carried their apparent support to a length which I, for one, find embarrassing. Mr. Peter Wiles' disenchantment with current policies extends to the Western economy as a whole. His cure for Britain's ills is to subject foreign trade and payments to a regimen of quotas and allocations *à la Russe*. I trust that remedies as desperate as this will never be part of the British pharmacopoeia. An occasional imposition of what is euphemistically called "physical controls" may at times be inescapable, but directed trade as a permanent feature of British economy is a condition more morbid than the one Mr. Peter Wiles is trying to cure. People like myself would rather languish in an England incapable of fast growth than prosper with the help of "Stalin's sterling."

Equally unacceptable is the diametrically opposite position into which the author of the leading article in the *Times Literary Supplement* of 24 May has chosen to fit my criticism of the economists. The writer obviously belongs to the same chapel of worshippers of *laissez-faire* as Morgenstern or Hayek or Jewkes, and like them has nothing but contempt for all attempts to interfere with the works of the economic Providence. It is therefore not surprising that he should find the true causes of Britain's predicament in socialist meddling with economic processes and in the hypertrophy of the national sectors of the economy. Few economic historians, however, will agree with him. They must rank present-day Britain, for all her difficulties, much higher—richer and better-placed for expansion—than the wholly untrammelled and privately owned economy of the Victorian and Edwardian eras. For this reason alone they could not ascribe Britain's post-war ailments to the socialist proclivities of her politicians, or to these proclivities alone.

I MUST, ABOVE ALL, disassociate myself from the point of view represented by my friend Professor Max Beloff. The uninitiated may easily mistake him for a supporter of mine, albeit an extreme one. This he certainly is not. We may be co-belligerents but we are not allies. Professor Beloff holds the entire occupation of economists in contempt and wants governments to reject their counsel root and branch. Whereas I, for all my strictures, regard the economists with the greatest respect. They represent the most highly developed, perhaps the only developed, branch of the social sciences, and have a great deal of pertinent wisdom to offer to both politicians and businessmen. And as I said in my article, they also happen to be a collection of intelligent people. My objection to the counsel of economists is not that it is wholly and always wrong, but that it is so often insufficient.

To remind readers, the criticisms in my article were largely directed at the narrowly economic range of economic advice and of the public debate of economic problems. In my view the advice of the economists and their contribution to the debate do not draw fully enough upon the specialised knowledge of other social

FEW *articles that we have published in recent years have caused the widespread comment and controversy which followed on M. M. Postan's "A Plague of Economists?" in the January* ENCOUNTER. *We have been able to print only a small selection of the communications and correspondence which resulted. Many other papers—from the* Financial Times *to the* Times Literary Supplement *and the* New Statesman—*devoted many pages to discussion by their own, not unpolemical, economic writers. Now Professor Postan, who has just returned to Cambridge University from a lecture tour which took him from Harvard to New Delhi, sums up the whole debate.*

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sciences or men of affairs. But the contention I pressed hardest was that within their own, purely economic, range the services of economists were excessively concerned with national aggregates and insufficiently informed with ideas about the separate components of the economy, its structural and institutional problems. My recommendations were to match. What was necessary was not to do away with the services of the economists, but to back them with the cognate expertise of other sciences and to infuse them with a larger dose of micro-economic understanding, *i.e.*, with ideas about the influences affecting the individual factors of production, labour, capital and management, or the factors shaping the structure and behaviour of individual industries and firms.

IT IS FOR THESE REASONS that I could not agree with Mr. Beloff; and they are also the reasons for which I cannot accept and sometimes even fail to understand some of the arguments advanced against me by Professor Harry Johnson. His article consists of two halves imperfectly matched. In the first half he takes me to task for not realising that it is in the nature of economics to concern itself with economic systems and says that my objections to the macro-economic and systemic preoccupations of economists and to their neglect of individual components of the economy betray my failure to understand the real functions of economic evidence. In the second half, however, Professor Johnson proceeds to explain why the economic advice available to the British governments is so largely made up of unbalanced and insufficiently considered macro-economic notions.

Indeed, these comments on the public performances of British economists are so uncomplimentary that I find it difficult to understand why Professor Johnson should have chosen to disagree with me. Does he not disapprove of the tendency of the British economists to "reserve a ceremonially adequate appearance of competence... by maintaining a sporting interest in the major issues of macro-economic policy" and their habit of "stereotyping the structure of the economy and the nature of its problems"? He goes much further than I in blaming the Keynesian revolution for the "jettisoning not only of micro-economics, but of the broad insight into the process of economic development" and for inhibiting economists "from investigating the extent to which macro- and micro-economic policies concerned with other objectives than the control of aggregate demand and investment have been inimical to growth." In view of the similarities between Professor Johnson's strictures and mine, it is not surprising that his desiderata should be, or at least appear identical with those implied in my article. His recommendation is

> to examine whether cognate social scientists on the one hand, and management and similar consultant experts on the other, have [not] more to say than the economists about what kind of changes in the existing social and institutional arrangements are capable of increasing productivity.

Somewhat outside this stream of thought, but equally close to mine, are Professor Johnson's views of the theoretical discrimination between primary and secondary industries. In his opinion the discrimination is no longer practised by respectable economists; so that in attacking it I appear to him to be flogging a dying horse. I wish he were right! A rigid demarcation between manufactures and services is the essence of *S.E.T.* A sharp distinction between primary and secondary industries—the former able, the latter unable, to provide labour reserves for economic growth—is the main theme of Professor Nicolas Kaldor's inaugural lecture. The same theme runs through several recent economic publications including Professor C. P. Kindleberger's book on economic growth in Western Europe.[1]

Even some of the contributors to the recent report of the Brookings Institution on the British economy, though exceptionally balanced and informed most of them appear to be, go on blaming the sluggishness of Britain's economic growth on the insufficient flow of recruits from agriculture. Unfortunately, and unexpectedly, the worst offender proves to be Mr. Edward F. Denison, the foremost American authority on economic growth. He cites with approval Prof. Kindleberger's and Prof. Kaldor's muddled notions about Britain's exhausted reserves of agricultural labour as an impediment to her growth; but he does not as much as mention the one-and-a-half million workers who have since the War moved from mining, textiles, the railways, domestic service and the other declining occupations into those of higher productivity. Professor Caves, the editor of the volume, in a chapter which is otherwise a model of catholicity and good sense, reproduces the argument without apparently noticing how difficult it is to reconcile with his own figures of re-allocation of employment since the War. These figures, based mainly on Sir Robert Hall's

[1] C. P. Kindleberger, *Economic Growth in France and Britain, 1850–1950*, Harvard, Oxford.

[2] Richard E. Caves (ed.), *Britain's Economic Prospects*: The Brookings Institution, Washington; Allen & Unwin, London, 1968.

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data, show that the transfer of labour into the faster growing and more productive industries went along more speedily in the U.K. than in the U.S.A. and, let me add, than in some much vaunted European economies.

Nothing, however, demonstrates better the continued hold of this set of statistical dogmas than the most recent pronouncements of the development economists in the United Nations Organisation in Geneva. No other international official commands greater respect among economists than Dr. I. Prebisch, or avails himself more freely of their services. Yet the memorandum with which he and his secretariat opened the proceedings of UNCTAD last February in New Delhi displays as clearly as can be the hoofs of this allegedly dying beast. The paragraphs decrying the advantages of increased productivity in agriculture in underdeveloped countries might have been written by Oscar Lange twenty years ago. Lange is now dead, but the old horse is still alive and kicking. However, what matters is not the current form of this particular mount but that both Professor Johnson and I should be now equally unwilling to ride it.

WHERE THE DISAGREEMENT between us comes out at its clearest is in the first half of the article dealing with the scope and nature of economics. Unfortunately this happens to be a topic on which I am loth to join issue with Professor Johnson. In my view a debate like the present one, conducted in general language and addressed to the wider intellectual public, is ill-suited to the methodological issue which Professor Johnson raises. Yet his argument must not remain unchallenged. So incontestable are his authority and reputation in these matters that, if uncontradicted, they may help to perpetuate what strikes me as an uncharacteristically inconsequential case.

The core of Professor Johnson's case is that it is in the nature of economics to consider the economy as a system in which individual phenomena are bound together by general relationships and that it would therefore be wrong to ask the economist [or indeed any scientist—M.M.P.] to predict and prescribe the behaviour of individual units of the system.

It would take a more expert logician than myself and a longer article than this to unravel the tangled skein of this argument. I must, however, be allowed to single out the nodal points at which the tangle is at its knottiest.

Tangle number one will be found in Professor Johnson's use of the term "system." If what he means by it is national economies considered in the aggregate, then what his argument ostensibly comes to is that national economies so considered make up the entire statistical universe of economics. This restriction of the subject of economics to national economies in the aggregate cannot be Professor Johnson's true object since it contradicts the many things he has written about in other places. But if it were his view, it would merely reinforce—and reinforce excessively—the reasons why economics and economists cannot be given the monopoly of guidance in economic matters. For not even the most bigoted economist would claim that there are no economic problems within ranges narrower than that of national aggregates.

Professor Johnson may, however, use the term "system" in a more strictly epistemological sense to denote mutually related phenomena or meaningful statistical series. In this case his anxiety to restrict the activities of economists to macro-economic topics is even more difficult to understand, for both in practice and in theory macro-economic phenomena are not the only ones to be considered as "systems." In practice economists have always tried to understand the behaviour of individual factors of production—capital, labour, and entrepreneurship—not only in their interaction within entire economic systems, but also considered separately. In all these separate or "local" studies, individual factors of production have invariably been treated as "systems" in the second sense of Professor Johnson's term. Economists have frequently concerned themselves with economic sectors, industries, and firms within their own fields of forces or distinct from the forces which shaped the economy as a whole.

In short, economists never ceased to occupy themselves with meaningful studies of local and structural problems of the economy. Their micro-economic interests may of late have been overlaid by the post-Keynesian preoccupation with general theories and systemic remedies. Yet most of the existing organisations devoted to applied economics (in the first place, the National Institute of Economic and Social Research) devote themselves mainly to structural problems, above all those of individual industries and sectors of the economy. And even though in my article I singled out the neglect of micro-economic problems in the current economic debate, I also pointed out that nowadays many British economists in Government offices—above all, in the D.E.A., the Ministry of Technology, the Board of Trade and on the Prices and Incomes Board—occupy themselves with the detailed and concrete problems of the economy. If we are to believe Mr. Michael Stewart, they do so unwillingly, and even resentfully, under the Prime Minister's compulsion. But, however insufferable is their

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forced labour in micro-economic fields, it has helped to produce such few signs of industrial and commercial recovery as have appeared of late—in shipbuilding, in certain branches of the engineering and electronic industries. In short, it has proved possible for some economists to exercise their professional intelligence in micro-economics without ceasing to be economists.

THIS THEY HAVE BEEN able to do for the simple reason that in their philosophy economics is not restricted to "systems" in Professor Johnson's sense of the term. Unlike him they have not as a rule assumed that national economies *in toto* are the only units of their statistical universe capable of being studied for the sake of meaningful relationships they can reveal. Factors of production taken separately, individual sectors of the economy, industries within each sector, and firms within each industry, can all be arranged into statistically observable series and exhibit their mutual relationships. Some such series and relationships have in fact occupied the attention of the most theoretical of theoreticians. One of Professor Kaldor's best-known contributions to theory deals with the economics of the firm, and so does one of the most elegant exercises (W. E. G. Salter's) in the theory of investment and innovations to come out of post-war Britain.[3]

YET ANOTHER AMBIGUITY in Professor Johnson's argument (one of the several ambiguities he shares with Mr. Stewart) attaches to his demarcation between matters micro-economic and macro-economic, the individual and the general, the theoretical and the practical. When in my article I complained of the neglect of local and individual problems by economists advising the government or participating in public debate what I had in mind was their lack of attention to the micro-economic issues, not their unwillingness to predict the doings of this or that individual firm and to interfere with it accordingly. I suspect that the reason why Professor Johnson has misunderstood me is that he does not distinguish sufficiently clearly between the generalised understanding of individual problems and the practical prescriptions for individual cases. At the cost of rubbing in the obvious, I should like to remind Professor Johnson that all theory, in fact all understanding, whether concerned with economic systems in the aggregate, or with local and particular economic phenomena, aims at revealing the generalised uniformities in statistical series or conglomerates. On the other hand most practical measures, both macro-economic and micro-economic, deal with unique phenomena. In macro-economic theories aggregate national economies are considered *seriatim* and are more or less abstracted from the individual and concrete circumstances of any particular country and time. But what macro-economists prescribe to politicians are measures to deal with individual situations—*e.g.*, the British economy in 1968: a phenomenon as unique and as practical as any problem thrown up by any particular firm at any particular point of time in post-war Britain. In other words what Professor Johnson objects to in the "Postanian style of individual service" is a style obligatory in *all* advisory services, *i.e.*, in the very purposes of social engineering designed to bring generalised knowledge to bear upon individual situations.

I APPEAR to detect a corresponding ambiguity in Professor Johnson's treatment of the differences between systemic and specific remedies. On these matters, however, Mr. Stewart (and the writer in the *New Statesman* echoes him) is simpler, and therefore easier to discuss than Professor Johnson. I therefore propose to address this particular part of my rejoinder to him. In defending macro-economic judgments and systemic remedies in the May ENCOUNTER, Mr. Stewart, like all other economists in this debate, has called in the marginal theory with all the certainty of a lay preacher invoking the holy writ. A holy writ it may indeed be. Even to a simple unbeliever like myself, marginal devices offer the most useful of all the tools of economic analysis. I nevertheless hope I shall not be accused of teaching my grandchildren to suck eggs if I remind Mr. Stewart that marginal analysis is not equally useful in all economic situations, and that its usefulness is subject to the same limitations which most economists now attach to the so-called "production function." Marginal analysis is most serviceable, *i.e.*, best capable of revealing the manner whereby adjustments to economic change take place or can be brought about, when applied to the continuous ranges of commodities or resources which happen to be uniform and "unspecific" in composition and perfectly divisible. It is *least* useful when applied to economic systems in their entirety, or to components within them—firms, industries, economic sectors—so large and complex and so lacking in uniformity as to defy all attempts to treat them as units of a graded range. What useful aids to understanding, or what pointers to economic policy could be got out of treating

[3] W. E. G. Salter, *Productivity and Technical Change* (1960).

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British shipbuilding—an industry of strategic importance for British exports—as *marginal*?

The position of an industry or a firm on the marginal scale will not even help to choose the proper macro-economic measures of a kind Mr. Stewart favours. One can think of many general and systemic prescriptions which could for a short time have reduced the comparative costs of all British exports, including ships—a devaluation, a general subsidy for industrial wages, interest-free investment *à la Russe*. The resulting benefits, however, would not only have proved temporary, but would have differed from industry to industry and from firm to firm in accordance not with their position on the marginal scale but with the systemic measure chosen. Yet at the same time no marginal test and no knowledge of the industry's rank on the marginal scale would be of any help in the actual choice of the appropriate systemic measure.

LEAST OF ALL could the marginal tests help economists to deal with, or even to recognise, the deep-seated causes of Britain's low and falling competitive potential abroad. The most likely effect of the marginal tests on an economist in search of deep-seated causes would be to blind his vision and to divert his attention. The troubles of the British shipbuilding industry in the mid-1960s were due to a number of economic, social and geographical factors of which their high comparative costs were merely an external manifestation. To confine the cure of British shipbuilding to a momentary scaling down of its costs with the help of devaluation (fortunately, this was not the official policy) would have been no better than doctors' attempts to treat disease by tampering with the thermometer. In all such treatments, the deep-seated causes must eventually reassert themselves and grow all the more morbid for the delay in attacking them directly.

The palliative nature of such general measures as devaluation is by implication admitted by their most passionate advocates. The advocates have sometimes recommended devaluation as a "breathing space"—an opportunity for proceeding at greater leisure with the more fundamental structural remedies. Is there any need for me to explain that in justifying devaluation by the need to "buy time" its advocates concede that real economic remedies cannot be wholly, or even mainly, macro-economic?

Unfortunately, a macro-economist like Mr. Stewart will not be necessarily put out by a consideration of this order. Mr. Stewart appears to believe that if local, specific and structural measures are required they could be brought about as mere by-products of macro-economic dispositions. He lists the possible local repercussions of general measures in a proud and loving catalogue:

> Changes in income tax affect the consumption of particular goods differently from changes in purchase tax; changes in investment grants affect the pattern and timing of investment differently from changes in interest rates; changes in expenditure by the Ministry of Housing will have very different effects on the industrial pattern of production, the regional distribution of unemployment, and even the balance of payments, from changes in expenditure by the Ministry of Social Security. And so on.

I am afraid in a properly compiled catalogue Mr. Stewart's articles of pride would merely figure as manifestations of faith. All the local consequences of macro-economic measures he lists are no more than doctrinal constructions dependent on a number of assumed and little-understood conditions. Mr. Stewart's examples would have been much more telling had he been able to show to what extent his hoped-for local effects did *in fact* materialise. The little I know about them leads me to believe that most of them are no more than pies in the sky. But even if some of them could have been attained by these particular means, as mere side effects of general policies not directly addressed to them, would this in fact be the most rational, the most enduring and, above all, the most effective way of attaining them?

I SUSPECT THAT the reason why Mr. Stewart does not ask himself these questions is that he happens to be somewhat unclear as to where local and specific problems end and general and non-specific ones begin. The very example with which he hopes to clinch his argument, that of nurses' wages, merely reveals this lack of clarity. "If there is a shortage of nurses . . . because nurses are underpaid" the proper remedy according to Mr. Stewart, would be to raise the nurses' wages. Had Mr. Stewart been more certain in his mind about his demarcations he would not have failed to discover that the remedy he favours provides the best possible example of the micro-economic and specific measures he dislikes so much in principle. The macro-economic measure appropriate to Mr. Stewart's case would be to raise incomes all round by a general "wage hike," in the expectation that the nurses' pay thus raised would satisfy the nurses and improve their recruitment. The alternative to the treatment of nurses' wages as merely marginal would be for us to investigate the peculiar occupational characteristics of the nursing profession, the particular type of labour drawn into it, and the special incentives required to stimulate its re-

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cruitment. If as a result of the investigation we came to the conclusion that no matter what happened to be the supplies of labour in the economy as a whole, the recruitment of nurses must be stimulated and that their earnings must be raised relative to the earnings in other occupations, the sensible policy would be to lift their wages, and theirs only. And this would be the procedure and the recommendation which most people would recognise as typically micro-economic.

The logic of nurses' wages applies to all the local effects Mr. Stewart expects to result from his general policies. By all means let Governments adopt general and systemic measures if and when the condition of the economy as a whole demands them; and if some of these measures also achieve desirable structural and local effects, *tant mieux*. But to expect the "local" and structural effects to follow certainly and predictably from systemic policies would be highly credulous; and to pursue systemic policies with the express object of achieving local results would be not only credulous, but also foolish. For the local repercussions of systemic policies are bound to be indiscriminate, their costs relative to their effects are apt to be excessive, and their ability to achieve the desired results must be highly uncertain.

Indeed to rely on general and systemic measures for dealing with those problems, which happen to be "local" and structural, is a course strikingly similar to the famous Chinese procedure for roasting pig. There are better recipes for pork joints—less costly and more certain—than the burning down of entire homes. To set a house on fire for the sake of a dinner is not only bad cooking, but also shockingly bad housekeeping.

I MUST, HOWEVER, ADMIT—and the admission exculpates Mr. Stewart somewhat—that not all economic problems can be unambiguously classified as either wholly macro-economic or wholly micro-economic. I might perhaps have prevented a certain amount of confusion had I spoken merely of the economists' preferences for general measures, and of their occupational reluctance to re-integrate their practical propositions with the social and historical circumstances from which the underlying doctrines had been abstracted for the ease of theoretical analysis. It so happens that most macro-economic propositions are in fact presented in this disembodied form, while most micro-economic studies are evidence-bound and hence also nearer reality. This divergence of methods is not, however, universal. It is sometimes possible for macro-economic discussion to be so well integrated with social and historical experience as to disarm the most cussed of critics. Some of the ostensibly macro-economic chapters in the Brookings report fall into this fortunate category. On the other hand, it is sometimes possible for local and particular studies to be so hedged round with arbitrary and artificial assumptions as to be wholly irrelevant even though micro-economic. The recent discussions of elasticities of demand for imports, or of sensitivities of exports to prices, or of the effects of industrial structure on growth, have been cast on a scale small enough to be micro-economic; yet some of their results are little more than theory *in peto*—mere mini-dogma. To quote the admirable Prof. Caves—

> Until very recently economic analysis of the relation of industrial organisation to growth and innovation has resembled theology more than science in its pre-occupation with deducing untested and conflicting general conclusions from untested *a priori* postulates.

This is, in fact, my complaint of what passes for economic knowledge and is offered as economic advice. The complaint applies mainly to systemic prescriptions, but it need not apply to them all; and it certainly does not confer the *fiat* on all the local and specific remedies coming out of the micro-economic drugstore.

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LETTERS

Cinema, Art & Reality

JOHN WEIGHTMAN'S review of *Herostratus* [ENCOUNTER, June] is a depressing example of critical incomprehension.

1. The only similarity between Sartre's *Erostrate* and Levy's film is that both borrow a fame-by-useless-destruction theme from Greek history. Levy owes Sartre precisely nothing. Why he should mention Sartre's story is beyond me.

2. Mr. Weightman complains that the film switches, or compromises, between realism and "phantasm," and says Surrealism did it earlier. Yes, and Expressionism and Symbolism did it earlier still. Earlier, but differently.

3. Mr. Weightman complains that the story-line is broken up by "irrelevant" images. Has he never read a novel with digressions, with philosophical asides? Aren't there "irrelevant" (in this sense) images in *Ulysses*? If a novel needn't be circumscribed by its storyline, why should a film?

4. Is Mr. Weightman really so sure that the leather lady isn't in the hero's mind? Or why shouldn't she be *both* a visual icon for an unconscious archetype, *and* a metaphysical entity—a modern Western equivalent of the Hindu goddess of destruction, Kali?

5. Obviously the director isn't crusading against sensuality or slaughterhouses, and Mr. Weightman is setting up a strawman in thinking he is. The film attacks the *sale* of *specious* sensuality. The striptease/slaughterhouse sequence (which I didn't think successful) has at least this justification: the strip spectator's eye depersonalises, *i.e.*, does violence to, *i.e.*, attacks, the girl's body; looking is thus cutting (as one might compare it to raping). The eye=knife metaphor should be understandable; one speaks of "a cutting glance," for example.

6. Mr. Weightman keeps posing "realistic" and "imaginative" as alternatives, or "story" and "phantasm." But most of our experience is part-real, part-phantasm; that's what "subjectivity" means, surely? The notion that the two modes ought to become mutually exclusive genres is grotesque. It would rule out expressionism; it would rule out fairytales (which are stories and phantasms); it would rule out *The Ancient Mariner* (so deficient in psychological realism). Many a novelist buttresses fantasy by realistic minutiae and tone (*e.g.*, Ballard, Borges), or a realistic story by hallucinatory elements (*e.g.*, Dickens). This film's type of stylisation is perfectly familiar to cinema audiences (*cp.* Losey's *Blind Date*) and Mr. Weightman's difficulty in adapting to its mode only suggests he hasn't thought deeply about many films, yet.

7. What the advertising agency gets out of the deal is quite clearly implied, by the text of the TV script Max won't read. Farson is trying to make him a martyr-example on a right-wing, Goldwater-cum-Mary-Whitehouse ticket, to mobilise idealist intolerance of "moral decay." Compare the Establishment use of the pop-singer in Peter Watkin's *Privilege*. Compare the Nazis' use of Horst Wessel. Farson sends the girl to "soften Max up" for quite obvious reasons; if Max isn't disillusioned, he's quite likely not to kill himself.

8. Mr. Weightman looks forward, with laboured irony, to the movie depiction of the sex act itself. He's behind the times; he should see Emshwiller's *Relativity* (financed, incidentally, by the Ford Foundation).

9. Mr. Weightman thinks he's scoring off *Herostratus* by pointing out that many of its criticisms of society are really criticisms of God. Let's think, rather, of the human predicament, whence the linkage between, for example, old age and Belsen. The common denominator is that people let people rot. There's no contradiction whatsoever between criticising society and criticising something more basic in man, in life.

10. To suggest, as Mr. Weightman suggests, that juxtaposing Attlee and Hitler without comment is to equate them is to overlook the obvious point that the differences are too obvious to need comment. What this sequence is about is the tendency of the meaninglessness of political rhetoric to cause nihilistic attitudes. Maybe politicians' promises don't depress Mr. Weightman, but they depress a great many responsible people.

I've made no attempt to suggest what the movie says that makes it interesting. But Mr. Weightman's inability to even think of the possibilities sketched above is depressing indeed.

RAYMOND DURGNAT

St. Martin's School of Art, London

WITH SOME OF THESE points I can agree. I mentioned Sartre simply to show that the central theme is the Absurdist hero. I am not asking for a watertight separation between the "realistic" and the "imaginative"; my view is rather that, outside scientific operations, realism is a very slippery concept and that, in art especially, one has to choose between various kinds of "imaginative realism," which may however be more or less convincing. Nor would I be so stupid as to condemn digressions or philosophical asides when they enhance, or are somehow relevant to, the main theme or themes. My reaction to *Herostratus* is that, on the whole, it does not present a form of imaginative cohesion that I can accept or appreciate. It strikes me as being a muddle, just as many novels or poems are muddles. Some ten years ago, I also thought *Hiroshima mon amour* a muddle. This is not to say that I want the work of art to be "clear." Mr. Durgnat quotes *The Ancient Mariner*; this is a poem I have never fully understood but have always found profoundly satisfying.

With other points I still totally disagree. The film does not "attack the sale of specious sensuality"; it is itself involved in such sensuality and sells quite a lot of it to the spectator. In pointing this out, I was not being prim or heavily ironical. I

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don't object at all to the sensuality but to the uneasy moral and aesthetic ambiguity with which it is handled. Then, in spite of Mr. Durgnat's explanation, I cannot figure out the relationship between the hero and the advertising agency, either on the literal or the imaginative level. I insist that there *is* a contradiction in working off on man what is really irritation with God. The juxtaposition of Attlee and Hitler as meaningless examples of political rhetoric *does* minimise the differences between them.

It is undeniable that the incoherent jumbling of symbols is characteristic of a good deal of modern art (*cf.* the American Underground films and some items in the present I.C.A. exhibition, *The Obsessive Image*). I would agree that, given the state of the world, such jumbling is probably a sort of historical necessity. But what is necessary, or at least explicable, historically may be aesthetically inadequate.

JOHN WEICHTMAN

London

Fiedler's Greece

WE ARE GRATEFUL TO ENCOUNTER and to Leslie Fiedler for his article on Greece. No piece of writing that we know of has yet expressed so knowingly and so carefully what life is like in Greece under the junta.

THEODORE & JACQUELINE ELIOPOULOS
Northwest Committee for Democracy in Greece
Seattle, Washington

MAY I call Professor Fielder's attention to the following points:

1. *Katharevousa* is not an artificial language and *demotiki* is not spoken by all Greeks. If one listens to the Moscow broadcasts in Greek—or indeed to speeches by most Greek politicians—it becomes obvious that they are more like *katharevousa* than *demotiki*.

2. Greeks, Turks, Lebanese and other peoples share a common cultural heritage from the time when the Byzantine Empire dominated most of the area between Euphrates and Danube. Mr. Fiedler must not forget this historical fact when he suggests that "the Turk lives in every modern Greek like a hated father." Even under the Turkish domination the Greeks exerted much stronger influence on the Turks than *vice-versa* (*cf.* Arnold Toynbee and other historians).

3. Greek folk-dances do not have "homosexual implications," although homosexuals—as common in Greece as everywhere else—are allowed to dance when and if and as they feel like it. In some respects Fiedler seems to have misunderstood modern Greeks as much as the colonels he dislikes.

The author of "Greek Mythologies" may need to be reminded that although myths live longer, facts remain the essence of reality.

ALEXIS KARAGIANIS

Oslo, Norway

MR. LESLIE FIEDLER'S article on "Greek Mythologies [ENCOUNTER, April] is an intelligent and sensitive approach to a subject he knows, loves and, temporarily at least, has left behind. His wit and insights will amuse and enlighten many a careworn Greek during the present crisis.

Although the picture that he paints is true, there are three points to which objection can be taken. First, myth—recent, perhaps "instant" myth—is reported as fact; the kind of "*Mangas*" he describes, called "Koutsavakis," became extinct in the 1900s under the zealous chief of police Bairaktaris. Today's "teddy-boys" wear mod clothes.

The second point concerns his reaction to "little Kybele"—that of a poet, I fear, of the romantic era. A young girl is cherishingly called by an ancient name, or its diminutive; linguistic memory has its own laws, different from those of other cultural phenomena, and I suggest this as an instance for rejoicement, not depressing sighs or laughter.

The third, more important point concerns the sense of hopelessness; it is to be found in the public realm, but it does not enter very deep into the Greek soul. There exists in Greece an intellectual community (which Mr. Fiedler has perhaps not approached) whose belief in the moral strength of the people remains firm. It is sustained by the strong drive to knowledge, education, that makes everyday life in Athens a battle of wits (not always for immediate gain) and, on a different scale, sends thousands of young Greeks abroad. There is no hopelessness where the belief in education is concerned in Greeks of every town and village, even if it has to be found abroad. And in an increasing number of young intellectuals there is at least a measure of hope for the future of our public affairs.

M. MOUSEVIGOU

Athens

Poets, Rabbis, Sociologists

IN the February ENCOUNTER, Nora Beloff writes (p. 35):

> "The American-sponsored survey of the 1967 refugees in Jordan revealed that, although three-quarters of them would like to go back and live even under Israeli rule, they are also convinced that war is now the only honourable and effective course open to the Arab nations. They are giving their newly born children names like Jihad, Harb, or Aïda, which mean struggle, war, and "the one who is returning." Certainly the hatred is being deliberately fomented by the Arab rulers in the surrounding countries. In the period before the June war the fantasy and filth pouring out of the press, radio, and television had reached Nazi proportions."

Since Miss Beloff is referring to our sociological survey we would be grateful for an opportunity to reply.

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In the first place, the statement that the refugees "... would like to go back and live even under Israeli rule," is not accurate. They are indeed desperately eager to return to their homes, but they have no "liking" whatsoever for Israeli rule. They want to return, and the only obstacle to return is Israel's adamant refusal to permit them to do so. Readers who may wish to see how Miss Beloff has misread our research findings may refer to the London *Times'* report of 3 November 1967.

In the second place, it is not fair to blame Arab leaders for any hatred that the refugees may feel toward Israel. Israel herself is responsible for much of this hatred. Israeli forces carried out mass evictions of villages. Entire villages were deliberately flattened by Israel *after* the war, as in the Latrun sector. Since the war, Israel has continued to evict Palestine Arabs, to dynamite their homes, to shell the refugee camps. These actions speaks louder than the statements of any Arab leader.

In the third place, our study was *not* American-sponsored. It was a volunteer effort on the part of ourselves and our students, aimed at assertaining the extent and character of the June evictions. The funds for this research, about $1000, came from contributors in Lebanon and Jordan.

As to the characterisation of Israel's "record of civilised behaviour" as "high, though it is not perfect" (p. 36), one should note Michael Adams' description of Israeli occupation policy, published in *The Guardian* on 25 January:

> "I had my ups and downs during four years as a prisoner of war in Germany, but the Germans never treated me as harshly as the Israelis are treating the Arabs of the Gaza Strip, the majority of whom are women and children."

Perhaps Miss Beloff would agree that charges of "Nazi proportions" are not to be thrown around lightly.

In contrast, we read with admiration Mr. Amos Elon's portrayal of Israel, in the same issue of ENCOUNTER, and Mr. Cecil Hourani's analysis, in your

"Naked Revolution"

Vienna

IN LECTURE ROOM I *of the new Institute at Vienna's University, the speaker—rimless spectacles, fringe, blue sports-shirt, yellow tie—is holding forth on the subject of "Input-Output Theory." While he's putting his diagrams on the blackboard, the attention of the 500 or so students crowding the benches and gangways has been diverted to a rather different demonstration. Suddenly, on the black table near the platform, a naked, somewhat skinny youth appears, proceeds to slash his chest with a razor, and to exhibit for the benefit of his ever-more-fascinated audience the several varieties of "output" of which his body is capable. The performance is rapidly "escalated" by the appearance of four more nudes, plus a fully stripped Masochist, howling under a rain of blows.*

Up to now the student movement in Vienna has been rather a tame affair, tagging along behind events in other parts of the world. This Happening—on an evening devoted to the theme of Art and Revolution—represented Vienna's attempt to outbid all comers in "provocation." In a statement issued by the organisers—a tiny Maoist splinter-group of the Austrian Socialist Students—we read:

> *"That someone should exhibit his naked body, putting himself publicly at the disposal of another, not under cover of darkness in some furtive spot, cannot fail to induce panic among those to whom the flesh is the province of the pornographer. It is obvious from people's shock and alarm at this public demonstration of sexual deviancy that Establishment culture, the aim of which is the idiotisation of the masses, is totally obscene. Authority is pornography."*

It seemed to me, I am afraid, that the shocking thing about the reaction of the audience in Lecture Room I was that it was too feeble. If just one *student had leapt to his feet and yelled "stop it!", if just* one *had protested against this confounding of subversion with perversion.*

But no one, of course, wanted to be thought prudish. The arguments of those few who dared to object at the end of this miserable Orgy-in-Academe had no chance against the pseudo-Freudian dialectic of the "Partisans." "The only art that makes sense in our society is Revolution. Art has no existence outside the world-wide struggle for liberation. Art is the Vietcong storming the U.S. Embassy in Saigon...."

Did the organisers of this Happening know that the "artist" they had persuaded to take part in their demonstration had been under psychiatric observation for several years in a Vienna mental hospital (his public declaration that it was high time "that whore [Freudenmädchen] Jackie Kennedy" was bumped off has to be seen in this light)? Were they aware that they were, in effect, providing a public platform for the private satisfaction of sexual neuroses? Did they realise that the effect of their demonstration, when it was reported throughout the world, would be to do the movement they claim to belong to a very poor service?

No doubt we could all blithely turn a blind eye to this somewhat embarrassing Happening had there not been that other Künstler *from the Vienna underworld, that wretched, impotent "artist" who went on to act out his fantasies on the world-stage.*

Robert Jungk

in DIE ZEIT (*Hamburg*)

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November issue. If peace is ever to come to the Middle East, it will be through the courage and candour of such men as these, not through (as Mr. Elon characterises them) "foggy poets and emotional rabbis.'

PETER C. DODD
HALIM H. BARAKAT

American University of Beirut

1. I do not think that I misquoted *The Times'* account of the Survey, which said that 75% of the Arab families questioned would choose to go back to their homes even under Israeli rule. But the writers certainly misunderstood the purpose of my article if they thought I was implying that the Palestinian Arabs or the Jordanians *like* the Israelis. The point I was trying to make was that this hostility dates back to the arrival of the Jews, and the struggle to eliminate them has been continuous, and is in no way connected either with the refugee problem or with the alleged oppression of the Arabs in the occupied areas.

2. The identification of Arab and Nazi propaganda is based on a study of the anti-Jewish caricatures published in the Arab press and the BBC monitoring of Arab radio stations in the period leading up to the war.

3. On the question of the behaviour of the Israeli occupation troops; I saw and heard nothing to confirm the atrocity stories. Fortunately, the Israelis have now invited the U.N. to go in and investigate. So perhaps we should await their verdict.

NORA BELOFF

London

Transatlantic Gap

IT ISN'T that "R" [ENCOUNTER, May] reads the wrong articles about the United States—it's just that he doesn't read widely enough. While Norman Mailer and Dan Wakefield and Mary McCarthy may be right—morally and politically—the majority of the American public does not believe this. We may be confused and troubled but are not yet ready to accept the leadership of the "New Left." Our election may be as surprising as that of de Gaulle—if one substitutes Humphrey or Nixon.

You well know that the "Ban the Bomb" marchers of a year ago, or Enoch Powell, or Michael Foot do not speak for Britain—any more than the Oxford Peace Movement in the '30's did. I believe *Time* and *Newsweek* speak far more for the average voter—and the now-defunct *Reporter* spoke for a large group of the liberals—larger than *Ramparts* does for the New Left. Anyway, you will get a far wider and more truthful picture of the country.

One can only plead for a better understanding between our two countries. Two years ago we left Manchester after a year there—discouraged about the news and reports in each country about the other. I am afraid that our basic community of interests may well be destroyed by misinformation and misunderstanding.

BETH JULIAN

Sausalito,
California

Fairlie's Fulbright

IT IS NOT surprising that Henry Fairlie, whose sorrow at the loss of the British empire is exceeded only by his rapture over the American one, should be unsympathetic to Senator Fulbright [ENCOUNTER, May]. Nor is it surprising that he should quote the Senator out of context, attack him on grounds that have nothing to do with his views on foreign policy, and even accuse him of cribbing quotations, as though it were inconceivable that he could actually have read Aldous Huxley or Ruth Benedict.

But it is a bit odd to find a Tory journalist seeking support from Karl Marx, reminding us that the Master saw imperial England as the "unconscious tool of history," and that therefore Senator Fulbright is presumably being unscientific in questioning the moral obligation of industrialised societies forcibly to impose their preferences on traditional ones. Crusading libertarian and defender of the downtrodden that his readers know him to be, Mr. Fairlie is distressed by Senator Fulbright's voting record on civil rights. He also takes the Senator to task for suggesting that psychiatrists might be able to teach us something about the behaviour of men and nations, and for not sufficiently appreciating how much the United States benefited from British seapower in the 19th century.

What most troubles Mr. Fairlie, however, is not the Senator's literary style, nor his voting record, nor his un-Marxist attitude toward the underdeveloped nations, but his belief that power can be used arrogantly, that imperial states are not necessarily virtuous because they are strong, and that the Johnson administration's adventures in Viet Nam were a moral and political disaster. More than any other single individual, Senator Fulbright, through his books and his role as chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, has made the American people aware of the truths of the Viet Nam war and thus set in motion the events that led to President Johnson's remarkable reversal of policy. If the United States is on its way to liquidating the Viet Nam folly, it is in no small part due to the efforts of Senator Fulbright.

This is what Mr. Fairlie finds unforgivable, since it betrays his rhapsodic view of "the exercise of power by the one nation which can preserve the Western idea of freedom for us and for the future." And how does he conceive that "Western idea of freedom?" Mr. Fairlie does not tell us, but a clue is given in an earlier article, "A Cheer for American Imperialism," which he is too modest to mention, but from which Senator Fulbright quotes in his book, *The Arrogance of Power*. In that article Mr. Fairlie praises the "American empire" as being

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uniquely benevolent, since it is devoted to individual liberty and the rule of law, and performed such services as getting him released from a Yugoslav jail simply by threatening to involve the American consul, a service he described as "sublime."

Since his native country has lost the taste for empire and its accoutrements, Mr. Fairlie has had to make the United States the object of his imperial longings. What a pity that Senator Fulbright and a growing majority of Americans are unmoved by such wisdom.

RONALD STEEL

New York City

"The Philby Affair"

IN HIS APRIL article on Philby, Professor Trevor-Roper makes some damaging misstatements to the reputation of Gerhart Eisler and, incidentally, the argument of his piece. He states that Eisler was a "communist spy" whose bail of $23,500 in the U.S. was "paid by Moscow." It was of course not: it was paid by the U.S. Committee for the Protection of the Foreign Born and the Civil Liberties Committees in the U.S., and by countless little people who put up countless small sums.

When Mr. Eisler left America, jumping his bail, —which was in 1949 not 1947 as Professor Trevor-Roper states—he went from England not "immediately to Moscow" (thus further "proving" he was a spy reporting to his masters) but to Leipzig, where he was offered a professional job by the present editor of *Die Weltbuehne*, Professor Herman Budzislawski, then to Berlin, where he was for many years Minister of Information, in fact until his recent death. Gerhart Eisler was a communist, but he was not, to my knowledge, a spy, a secret intelligence agent, or a conspirator.

ELLA WINTER

London

MISS WINTER misquotes me. I did not write that Eisler went "immediately to Moscow" or that this "proved" that he was a Russian spy. I believe that he was a spy, and nothing that Miss Winter says changes my belief; but my belief does not rest merely on the evidence of his flight, nor is my argument in any way "damaged" by Miss Winter's local details.

I assumed that the $23,500 bail, which Eisler, by his flight, caused his sureties to forfeit, had been covered by the Russian government. Miss Winter insists that Eisler merely defrauded "countless little people" who benevolently supported him, and that, being entirely innocent, he had no need to defraud them. Her interpretation is an assumption, like mine; but mine at least is more generous to Eisler, and more plausible in itself.

H. R. TREVOR-ROPER

Oxford

Shonfield & Forster's India

ANDREW SHONFIELD in his article [ENCOUNTER, January] shows an almost equal ability to misread Forster and to misread me. He writes: "It is not entirely clear what Forster meant when he said many years after that 'political views' in *A Passage to India* are of 'secondary or tertiary' importance." I can think of two ways of clearing up the confusion: (*1*) asking Forster, or (*2*) listening to those numerous critics, including Trilling (or myself) who have seen some things besides "politics" in that novel.

Mr. Shonfield claims that I read *Passage* as a work "centred on Hindu thought." This is not true. If I may quote myself: "Forster is not recommending Hinduism or cave-worship as a way of life any more than he is recommending Mohammedanism or Christianity. 'Proportion' is still his recommendation, but his perspective on what that includes has widened enormously." Mr. Shonfield goes on to say that there is "no evidence that Forster, at the time he was writing, was especially concerned or influenced by Hindu mythology." The evidence is all around. For one thing, E. B. Havell's *Ideals of Indian Art* (1911) "opened an epoch" for Forster. Maybe the mythology is not to Mr. Shonfield's liking (not even Forster will vouch for Havell's "accuracy"), but it is simply absurd to suppose that Forster was not "concerned or influenced by" Hindu mythology. The most cursory reading of Forster's articles before 1924 would have shown the opposite. And was Forster trying "to get rid of the awkward Hindus" in his novel? Then why did he devote a whole part of a tripartite novel to them, which he called "Temple"? Surely, just because Moslems and Englishmen appear in that section, does not mean it is a sell-out to the Moslem faction.

Mr. Shonfield seems unable to read this novel except as a factional, rather than fictional, work. Had he been able to do so, he would have seen that Aziz, the Moslem, is not the "main character" of the novel; he shares the stage with Godbole and Ronny. He is of course more alive, more interesting, more fully developed; but in giving him more pages, Forster did not give him more importance. Mr. Shonfield fails to grasp that the space given to a subject—the mere quantity—is not necessarily the value given to it. He objects to "how little" Forster devotes to the Hindus, and he criticises what Forster does with them when he does bring them in: "They are people who are quite incapable of inspiring interested emotion in the reader, largely no doubt because they are also incapable of expressing any genuine emotion themselves."

Here, Mr. Shonfield is speaking for himself—and perhaps for some of his countrymen. As Forster has said, the problem is that the Hindus simply "bore" the British; it was one of the fundamental reasons the British made such a mess of dealing with them. In Mr. Shonfield's retrospect on Britain's departed imperialistic glories, he is repeating the old mistake. The Hindus in Forster's book may "bore" Mr. Shonfield, but they are there —and they don't bore everyone. I suggest that he read the book again—and maybe the whole book of

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Britain's imperialistic adventure. This is a *novel*; it tells about how people *felt*; and quoting Philip Woodruff at us to say how good and intelligent the English were at heart does nothing to minimise the fact that there were also Englishmen like George Dyer who, on 13 April 1919, supervised the massacre of 379 people in Amritsar. Relatively speaking, the British may have been more decent than the other European imperialists, but keeping scores on that argument is not what Forster is doing here. He is writing a book that shows the suture point between personal and political relations, and wants (among other things) to dramatise how important it is that personal feelings count in the political relations of nations.

It is a point that Mr. Shonfield misses in his article, as it is a point that President Johnson misses in his relations with the Vietnamese. It matters in the long run—even politically—how people feel. Forster was possessed by that issue, by what happens when people (any people) exploit other people. That seems to be one of "the less obvious facts of politics" that Mr. Shonfield has not paid sufficient attention to.

WILFRED STONE

Stanford University,
California

Aron & Tocqueville

RAYMOND ARON'S reference [ENCOUNTER, August] to a critic in *L'Express* who took him to task for urging his readers during the May days "to re-read Tocqueville (1805–1859)" is a little cryptic. Did he? Why? And what in Tocqueville? Now that the barricades are down all of us have a bit more time for reading.

J. R. VAN DAMM

Amsterdam

[*M. Aron published some passages from Tocqueville's account of the revolutionary 1848 events in an article entitled "Immuable et changeante." The quoted remarks were all taken from Tocqueville's* Souvenirs, *an English edition of which was prepared by J. P. Mayer in 1948* (Recollections, *Harvill Press*). *The reader can judge their relevance for himself—see the selection on pp. 36–37 of this number of* ENCOUNTER.—*Ed. Note.*]

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The Index to Volume XXX (January–June 1968) is now available and will be sent, free of charge, on application to ENCOUNTER, 25 Haymarket, London, S.W.1. Standing orders for future indexes can also be accepted.

Readers who have already applied to be put on our new standing order list need not apply again, as they will receive the new index automatically.

AUTHORS

Leo Rosten is a novelist, lexicographer, political scientist, and journalist (he writes a regular column for *Look Magazine*). His study of *Hollywood: the Movie Colony, the Movie Makers* (1941) was a pioneering sociological study. Among his recent novels are *Captain Newman, M.D.* (1961), and *A Most Private Intrigue* (1967), both published by Gollancz. Under the pseudonym of Leonard Q. Ross he was the author of the famous *Education of H*y*m*a*n K*a*p*l*a*n* (1937). He was born in Lodz (Poland) in 1908, took his Ph.D. at the University of Chicago, and has been a lecturer and visiting professor at various American colleges and universities....

Professor Bruce Mazlish lectures at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He is the author of *The Riddle of History* (1966) and co-author (with J. Bronowski) of *Western Intellectual Tradition* (1960). He has just spent a year in London doing research on a father-and-son study of James and John Stuart Mill....

Brian Wicker *writes of himself:* "Born 1929 in suburban Wallington, Surrey... 1947–9: Sergeant-Instructor, Royal Army Educational Corps, trying in vain to teach Army illiterates... 1949–52: Oxford—1st class Hons. in English.... Various jobs (L.C.C. Engineers Dept., etc.). M.A. in Philosophy on Newman's concept of logic. (Had become a Catholic in 1951, under influence of Dominicans at Oxford.)... Published *Culture and Theology* (1966) and *First the Political Kingdom* (1967); regular writer for *The Guardian*.... Am now a staff tutor in English literature at the University of Birmingham, and will be in the U.S.A. at the University of Michigan in the autumn...."

Eugène Ionesco's "Journal" was translated by Philip Thody....

THE two new Osborne plays (*Time Present* and *The Hotel in Amsterdam*) discussed this month by **John Weightman,** have just been published in one volume by Faber & Faber, 25s....

Cover design by **Colin Banks** and **John Miles**

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Paris

IT *must have been quite a shock to the student revolutionaries to discover someone whose conception of revolution goes even further than theirs. Guest artist at the Sorbonne non-stop discussion group last week was Jean Genet, the darling of France's intellectuals.*

He expressed the uncompromising view that the entire social framework needed to be thrown out of the window, and pushed his argument to its logical conclusion. Money, and even people's names, should be scrapped.

Feeling themselves outdistanced by their visitor, the young extremists hastily shifted to what they hoped was safer ground. Did M. Genet believe that the current disorders could be likened to a psychological play? "No," was the reply. "When a policeman clips you on the jaw, that's no interior conflict." DAILY TELEGRAPH

Warsaw

THE WARSAW POLICE *have arrested about 50 students protesting against the forced closure of a Polish play of sharp anti-Russian flavour. Most have since been released.*

The popular play Dziady (*Forefather's Eve*) *had been running at the National Theatre.*

The play, by the 19th-century poet Adam Mickiewicz, is a drama of the martyrdom of Poland under the oppressive rule of Tsarist Russia. The work is required reading in Polish schools. It contains such lines as: "All they send us from Moscow are jackasses, fools and spies," and: "We Poles have sold our souls to Moscow for a couple of silver roubles." THE TIMES

London

THE ALTERNATIVES *to evolving constitutional methods—riot, commotion, usurpation, confiscation—should be seen for what they are without false glamour. They brutalise the civil order, are paid back in their own coin, increase the distance between power-holders and the rest, breed fear, curtail liberty. A preponderance of those who are seduced into assailing the "system" by methods which lead in that direction appear to be students, and, since they are students, their attention should be drawn to the writings of Thomas Hobbes as well as those of Che Guevara.* THE TIMES

Milan

THE TRIAL HAS BEGUN *here in Milan of Piero Cavallero, 39, Italy's astonishing robber-philosopher, who was arrested after a bank robbery in September 1967 during which Cavallero and his band killed four persons.*

In his opening statement to the court, Cavallero said: "The banks are the most shameless symbol of Capitalism. To rob a bank is a revolutionary deed...." As he was speaking, a local cinema began showing a Technicolor film based on his life and deeds: Carlo Lizzani's "Banditi in Milano."

As Cavallero went on to explain, "My problem was always whether I should accommodate myself to the existing system or revolt against it by any and all means." He chose the latter, and as a result faced economic problems. "After all one has to finance revolutionary activity." He belonged to various anarchist groups, read widely in "progressive literature," participated in debates and discussions. He quoted from Dante, Kant, Hegel, Marx, and Marcuse. He explained that "through bank robberies we make our contribution to the realisation of our political ideals. They are acts of revolution, for banks are merely the instruments of capitalist exploitation."

The charges against Cavallero and his three accomplices include 5 murders, 21 attempts at murder, 5 kidnappings, and 17 bank robberies.

"I have always lived as a revolutionary and on the front lines. I have not been interested in hedonistic self-satisfaction, but in the struggle to realise ideals of freedom. I used to have some sympathies with the Communists but they have become bourgeois and have become integrated into the system....If you wish to put it that way, I was a forerunner of the Chinese way."
SÜDDEUTSCHE ZEITUNG

London

WHILE THE *160 boys from Wagner's School in Queen's Gate have been on holiday, a team of surveyors sent by the German Embassy has been carrying out structural surveys of the school's buildings. The Germans are keenly interested in the school as a possible German equivalent of the flourishing French Lycée nearby, which has done a good deal to further* la mission civilisatrice de la France.

The Germans have been looking for a suitable property for their German School for the past five years. "If we did decide we wanted Wagner's," Dr. Brigitte Lohmeyer, the cultural counsellor, tells me, "we would certainly change the name. This Wagner is a different gentleman." THE TIMES

London

A "BLACK CULTURE" *centre in Notting Hill Gate, London, is likely to be opened before the end of this year. It will be backed by the militant Black People's Alliance and be financed principally by £5,000 from Sammy Davis, Junior.*

The centre will concentrate on the cultures of Asia and Africa—"going further into our backgrounds," said Mr. Roy Sawh, "to see why something went wrong. Something must have gone wrong, because we are speaking English."
THE GUARDIAN

London

KENNETH TYNAN: *Would you call yourself an intellectual?*

JOHN OSBORNE: *No. I don't think conceptually. If I see or hear an idea, I turn it into something concrete, just as a sculptor turns it into something in space. I'm not a thinker in the accepted sense. That's why so many intellectuals are impatient with the theatre—they get pissed off because there isn't some* ENCOUNTER*-type debate going on, with a great verbal to-and-fro and ideas exploding like fireworks.* THE OBSERVER

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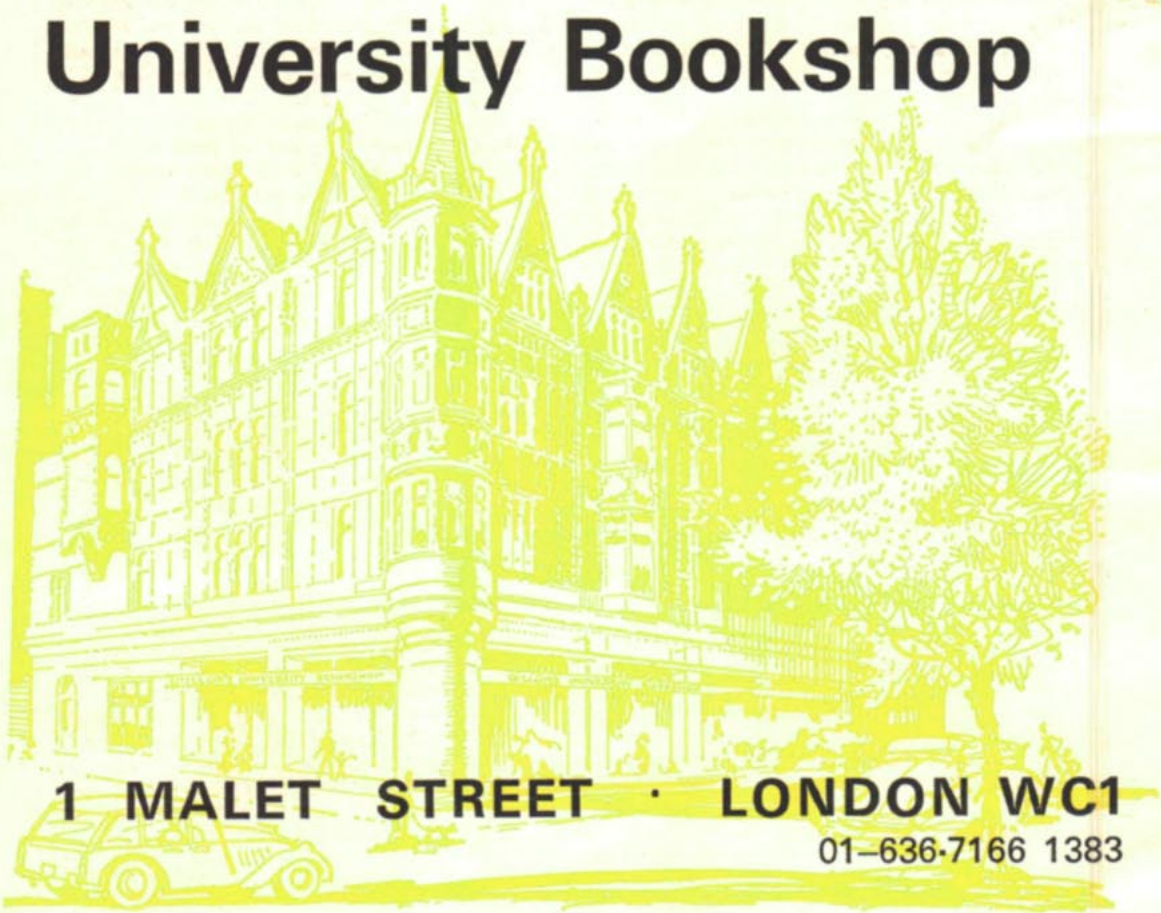

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